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# Karnataka Assembly ratifies revocation of suspension of 18 BJP MLAs

**BENGALURU, 11 AUG**

Karnataka Legislative Assembly on Monday ratified the revocation of suspension of 18 BJP MLAs, originally suspended in March for alleged indiscipline and disrespect towards the Speaker.

Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister HK Patil moved a motion seeking the House's approval to withdraw the resolution passed during the sixth session on 21 March. The motion was approved unanimously through a voice vote.

The suspension, which was for a period of six months, was revoked earlier on 25 May following a meeting chaired by Speaker U T Khader. The meeting included Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar, Leader of Opposition R Ashoka, and Minister H K Patil.

The decision came after R Ashoka appealed to the Speaker to reconsider the suspension. The suspended MLAs also submitted a petition expressing regret for their conduct.

Patil stated, "The Speaker called a meeting on 25 May and it was decided to revoke the suspension to allow the MLAs to fulfil their legislative duties. Today's ratification formalises that decision."

The 18 MLAs include senior leaders like former Deputy CM C N Ashwath Narayan, BJP chief whip Doddanagouda Patil, and legislators such as SR Vishwanath, Muniratna, and Yashpal Suvarna.

The unprecedented suspension followed chaotic scenes in the Assembly on the last day of the budget session. BJP MLAs had protested against 4 per cent reservation for Muslims in public contracts and demanded a judicial probe into an alleged "honey-trap" attempt involving KN Rajanna. Protesters had climbed the Speaker's podium and hurled papers, prompting forceful eviction by marshals. *—PTI*

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K'TAKA ASSEMBLY MONSOON SESSION

## Israel kills 5 Al Jazeera journalists in Gaza

**JERUSALEM, 11AUG**

Israel's military killed Al Jazeera journalist Anas al-Sharif and four of his colleagues in a targeted airstrike late Sunday. Seven people were killed overall in the attack on the tent located outside the main gate of Gaza City's al-Shifa Hospital late on Sunday evening. They include Al Jazeera correspondent Mohammed Qreiqeh and camera operators Ibrahim Zaher, Mohammed Noufal and Moamen Aliwa. Officials at Shifa Hospital said the strike also damaged the entrance to the hospital complex's emergency building. *—PTI*

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## SC bins Army rule of lesser JAG posts for women

**NEW DELHI, 11 AUG**

The Supreme Court on Monday struck down a policy of the Army restricting the appointment of women officers to the Judge Advocate General (JAG) branch, stating that merit and not gender should be the basis of selection and appointment to a particular position. A Bench of Justices Dipankar Datta and Manmohan said a policy dividing candidates on the basis of gender and reserving more posts for men cannot meet the standards approved by law. Section 12 of the Army Act, 1950 grants exception to women and allows them to join branches like the JAG. The JAG department's prime duty is to offer legal advice to the Army. *—PTI*

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## AI suspends Delhi-Washington DC flights

**NEW DELHI, 11 AUG**

Air India will suspend its Delhi–Washington DC flights from 1 September due to a shortage of Boeing 787 Dreamliner aircraft and ongoing airspace restrictions.

The airline said the suspension is mainly driven by the retrofit of 26 Boeing 787-8 aircraft, which began last month. The upgrade programme, aimed at enhancing passenger experience, will render several aircraft unavailable until at least end-2026.

Additionally, the continued closure of Pakistani airspace has added complexity and increased flying times for long-haul routes, forcing operational adjustments.

Air India currently operates a thrice-weekly Delhi–Washington service via Vienna, introduced after the airspace closure made direct flights impractical. Passengers with bookings beyond 1 September will be contacted and offered alternatives, including rebooking or full refunds. The affected flights are operated using Boeing 787-8 aircraft . *—PTI*

# Minister Rajanna ousted for flaying 'vote theft' claim

## He said voter theft happened right in front of Cong govt's eyes

Cooperation Minister KN Rajanna leaves the Vidhana Soudha after he was removed from the Council of Ministers on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

**BENGALURU, 11 AUG**

- His dismissal triggered a row in the Karnataka Assembly, with BJP demanding a clarification. R Ashoka questioned whether corruption charges were involved.

In a sudden move, Karnataka Cooperation Minister KN Rajanna was sacked from the Cabinet on Monday following instructions from the Congress high command. The decision came after Rajanna's controversial remarks on "vote theft" in Mahadevapura during the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, which embarrassed the party and its leader Rahul Gandhi.

Sources said Chief Minister Siddaramaiah initially asked Rajanna to resign. However, upon his refusal, the Siddaramaiah wrote to Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot recommending his dismissal, which was promptly accepted by the Raj Bhavan.

Rajanna, a known Siddaramaiah loyalist, claimed the Congress top brass — including party president Mallikarjun Kharge and general secretary K C Venugopal — had a "misconception" about him. He announced plans to travel to Delhi with senior MLAs and ministers to clarify his position.

Rajanna drew flak for publicly stating that vote theft occurred "right in front of our eyes" under the Congress government in the Mahadevapura segment of Bengaluru Central. This directly contradicted the party line, especially after Rahul Gandhi had accused the BJP of vote theft and cited over one lakh bogus voters in the same area.

This is not Rajanna's first clash with party leadership. In recent months, he criticised the party's internal functioning, alleging multiple power centres, and hinted at major political shifts after a so-called "September Revolution".

His sacking sparked debate in the Karnataka Assembly, with BJP leaders demanding clarity. Leader of Opposition R Ashoka questioned the grounds for dismissal, saying Rajanna merely "spoke the truth". He also speculated whether Siddaramaiah himself could be the next target.

BJP MLA S Suresh Kumar insisted the government issue an official statement, as the removal coincided with the legislative session. *—PTI*

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**AGAINST 'VOTE CHORI'**

LoP Congress leader Rahul Gandhi helps TMC MP Mitali Bag after she fell sick during the protest march to EC **PHOTO: PTI**

# Oppn MPs detained during march to EC

**NEW DELHI, 11 AUG**

High drama unfolded outside Parliament on Monday as over 30 Opposition MPs, including Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, and Akhilesh Yadav, were detained by Delhi Police during a protest march to the Election Commission (EC) over alleged "voter chori" (vote theft) in Karnataka and Bihar.

The protest, led by INDIA bloc leaders, accused the BJP-led government of electoral malpractice during the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. As the march progressed, Delhi Police stopped the MPs near the PTI building using heavy barricading.

Some MPs, including TMC's Mahua Moitra and Congress leaders Sanjana Jatav and Jothimani, climbed the barricades and raised slogans. Moitra and TMC's Mitali Bag fainted during the protest and were later taken away by police, along with other detained MPs, to the Parliament Street Police Station. All were released later.

Police claimed only 30 MPs had been permitted to visit the EC, but protesters arrived in "large numbers" without prior permission for the march.

Rahul Gandhi stated, "This fight is not political but for the Constitution. We want a clean, pure voter list — one man, one vote." Congress's Jairam Ramesh dubbed the EC "Churao Aayog" and said the party had written to the Commission seeking a meeting on SIR-related concerns.

Priyanka alleged the government was "scared" and called it a "coward" for stopping the march.

Three TMC MPs — Dola Sen, Pratima Mondal, and Mamata Thakur — managed to reach the EC office but were not allowed entry. *—PTI*

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## LS passes new Income Tax Bill in just 3 minutes

**NEW DELHI, 11 AUG**

The Lok Sabha on Monday passed the Income Tax Bill (No. 2), 2025 in just three minutes without debate. The Bill aims to replace the 63-year-old Income Tax Act, 1961, streamlining provisions for individuals and corporations.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman reintroduced the revised Bill, incorporating suggestions from a parliamentary panel, after withdrawing the original version on 8 August. The Bill simplifies compliance, halves the Act's word count, and replaces terms like "assessment year" with "tax year." It permits refunds on belated returns and exempts TCS on education-related LRS remittances.

Deductions on inter-corporate dividends and changes to carry-forward of losses align with the current law. However, contentious provisions on tax searches remain. While references to "digital space" were removed from Clause 247, the definition of "computer systems" still includes it. This means from 1 April, 2026, tax officers may override passwords to access emails, social media, trading accounts, and other digital platforms during searches, raising privacy concerns. The clause allows officers to break open locks or override access codes where keys or passwords are unavailable if there's reason to suspect tax evasion. Critics argue this could grant sweeping powers to tax authorities under the guise of digital compliance. *—PTI*

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## India hits back as Munir gives nuke threat from US

**NEW DELHI, 11 AUG**

India on Monday condemned Pakistan Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir's nuclear threat made from US soil, calling it "nuclear sabre-rattling" and Pakistan's "stock-in-trade."

Munir, addressing the Pakistani diaspora in Tampa, Florida, warned of nuclear retaliation if Pakistan faced an existential threat and threatened to destroy Indian infrastructure over water disputes.

India's Ministry of External Affairs said the remarks raise concerns about Pakistan's nuclear command integrity and reaffirmed India will not succumb to nuclear blackmail.

It also termed it regrettable that such comments were made from a friendly third country.

Government sources noted this pattern of aggression when the US engages with Pakistan's military, highlighting the absence of true democracy and warning of a possible coup attempt by Munir. This marks Munir's second US visit in two months. *—PTI*

***>>>More on Page 3***

## Zelenskyy briefs Modi on Russia attacks

**NEW DELHI, 11 AUG**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday held a phone conversation with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and reiterated India's commitment to supporting a peaceful resolution to the Ukraine conflict. The two leaders are expected to meet in September.

The call came ahead of a key summit between US President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin. In a social media post, Modi said he was "glad to speak" with Zelenskyy and hear his views on recent developments. "I conveyed India's consistent position on the need for an early and peaceful resolution. India remains committed to making every possible contribution," Modi said.

Zelenskyy said he discussed all major issues, including bilateral cooperation and the broader diplomatic situation. He thanked Modi for his support. The Ukrainian leader also emphasised the need to tighten sanctions on Russia, especially by curbing its energy exports. *—PTI*

## Kin seeks reopening of 1986 Dharmasthala death case

**MANGALURU, 11 AUG**

Nearly 39 years after the death of pre-university student Padmalatha, her family has petitioned the Special Investigation Team (SIT) to reopen the case, seeking justice and clarity after decades of unanswered questions.

Padmalatha, daughter of the late Devananda, was a PUC student at SDM College, Ujire. She went missing on 22 December 1986, with her last known sighting reported from Dharmasthala. Her decomposed body was discovered weeks later, on 17 February 1987, near the Neriya stream.

Her elder sister, Indravati, a resident of Nelyadi, submitted a formal request to the SIT on Monday, calling for the body to be exhumed and the case reinvestigated. She pointed out that previous inquiries, including one by a Circulating Officer, failed to bring closure. Indravati said, "We have been fighting for justice for decades. Now that the SIT is probing suspicious deaths, we see hope." *—PTI*

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**ACTIVISTS PROTEST**

## *Move Delhi stray dogs to shelters: SC*

**NEW DELHI, 11 AUG**

PHOTO: PTI

Calling the situation caused by stray dog bites "extremely grim", particularly among children, the Supreme Court on Monday ordered the governments and civic bodies of Delhi, Noida, Gurugram and Ghaziabad to begin removal of stray dogs from public spaces.

A bench of Justices JB Pardiwala and R Mahadevan directed the creation of dog shelters with CCTV monitoring, sufficient personnel for sterilisation and immunisation, and a capacity to house at least 5,000 dogs within six to eight weeks. It warned against any dog being released back onto the streets, calling the move a "progressive exercise".

It issued strict instructions that no compromise would be tolerated in undertaking this effort. Any individual or organisation obstructing this would face contempt proceedings. The court also ordered the creation of a helpline within a week for reporting dog bites, with dogs to be picked up within four hours of a complaint. PETA warned large-scale displacement is "unscientific" and ineffective. Following SC order, Rajasthan HC too ordered municipal bodies to remove stray dogs from public places. *—PTI*

## B'deshi teen raped by 200 men in 3 months

**PALGHAR, 11 AUGUST**

A 14-year-old Bangladeshi girl, rescued from a sex trafficking racket in Maharashtra's Palghar, has claimed she was raped by at least 200 men over three months, police said.

Ten individuals, including two women aged 33 and 32 who facilitated the girl's illegal entry from Bangladesh, were arrested. Six of those arrested and three of the five victims are Bangladeshis.

The minor ran away from home after failing a school subject. Police suspect she was given hormonal injections to induce premature puberty and was sedated and branded with a hot spoon to coerce her into the flesh trade. The racket trafficked victims to Navi Mumbai, Pune, Gujarat, Karnataka, and other regions. Main accused Mohammad Khalid Abdul Bapari, 33, and agents Juber Harun Sheikh, 38, and Shamim Gafar Sardar, 39, are among those detained. *—PTI*

## Security delays likely in KIA on Independence Day

**BENGALURU, 11 AUG**

BIAL, the operator of Kempegowda International Airport in the City has urged passengers to allow extra time for security checks due to an anticipated increase in traveller numbers during the Independence Day week. In an advisory, Bengaluru International Airport Limited highlighted that enhanced security measures in August may lead to delays in passenger processing at the airport. "Passengers are advised to plan their arrival times to accommodate sufficient time for security checks," the airport stated. Travellers were also encouraged to consult their respective airlines for specific guidance, it added —*PTI*

## Tourist escapes elephant attack at Bandipur Park

**CHAMARAJANAGAR, 11 AUG**

A tourist had a fortunate escape after being charged by a wild elephant in Bandipur National Park, located in Gundlupet taluk of Chamarajanagar district of the State, officials reported on Monday. The incident took place on Sunday along the national highway that runs through the Bandipur forest. It is said the tourist, believed to be from Kerala, attempted to take a photograph of an elephant feeding on tomatoes when the animal became agitated and charged at him, nearly trampling him underfoot. Fortunately, the tourist survived the encounter, sustaining only minor injuries. Forest officials are currently making efforts to identify him and gather further information regarding the incident —*PTI*

## Health staff denied leave amid ASHA workers' strike

**BENGALURU, 11 AUG**

In anticipation of a planned three-day strike by Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA) workers set to commence on 12 August, the State Health Department has issued a directive prohibiting all officers and staff from taking leave during the protest period, barring medical emergencies. ASHA workers are demanding a fixed monthly honourarium of Rs 10,000, which they assert was promised by the state government in January. They have declared a continuous state-level protest from 12 to 14 August. The Health Department therefore called upon community health officers, primary health protection officers, health inspectors, and Anganwadi workers to ensure that health services for the public remain uninterrupted throughout the strike. —*PTI*

# DKS says, Rajanna at fault for the false claims

## BJP says Cong is suppressing the truth, backs the claims

**BENGALURU, 11 AUG**

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar dismissed former State's cooperation minister KN Rajanna claims that irregularities in voter lists occurred during the Congress-led tenure "right in front of our eyes".

"Rajanna is totally at fault. He doesn't know," Shivakumar told reporters in Bengaluru on Monday morning.

However, after Rajanna's suspension, he said, "I am also pained by this, he is a good friend. We have been politics together for the last 25 years.... As far as I know, it is the party's decision. I don't have any other info."

Rajanna later said he would travel to New Delhi to meet the party High Command.

"Our party High Command, our party President and Congress General Secretary KC Venugopal have some misconceptions about me," he said. "I will go to New Delhi to meet them all to try to clear the air."

Former cooperation minister KN Rajanna **PHOTO: PTI**

Reiterating his loyalty to the party, Rajanna said, "Whatever I may say, but the final thing is that I am committed to the party high command."

The controversy stems from Rajanna asking why Congress leaders "turned a blind eye" over irregularities in voter lists and kept silent.

Rajanna had said. "When was the voter list prepared? It was prepared when our own government was in power. At that time, was everyone just sitting quietly with eyes closed?... We should be ashamed"

Meanwhile, BJP came to the defence of Rajanna, asking why the Congress was supressing ministers who "dared to speak the truth".

After Rajanna exposed the lies of clown Rahul Gandhi, he has been humiliated and unceremoniously shunted out

- Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said, 'I am also pained by this, he is a good friend. We have been politics together for the last 25 years.... As far as I know, it is the party's decision. I don't have any other info.'

of the Cabinet," the State BJP X handle wrote. "In Congress, truth has no place, survival means bending backwards as a gulam to the dynasty.... Without lies, Congress dies."

Similarly, Opposition Leader R Ashoka wrote on X, "In Congress, truth is the biggest crime. Rajanna merely stated a fact.... If their own minister says the electoral roll was their creation, whom are they blaming now? Congress is allergic to truth, and quick to punish anyone who dares speak it. The people of Karnataka can see through this hypocrisy."

—*Salar News with Agencies*

**TENSE ASSEMBLY**

BJP and JD(S) MLAs and MLCs protest the RCB stampede, at Gandhi statue in Vidhana Soudha on Monday **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

# 'Medical vacancies to be filled after internal reservation'

**BENGALURU, 11 AUG**

Vacant posts in government-run medical colleges will be filled only after the State government takes a decision on the internal reservation, Minister for Medical Education, Skill Development, Entrepreneurship and Livelihood Dr. Sharanaprakash Patil said in the Legislative Council.

Responding to a question during the Question Hour on Monday, Patil said that retired High Court Judge Justice HN Nagamohan Das submitted a report to the Cabinet on implementing internal reservation. This report has already been discussed in the Cabinet meeting last week and a final decision is likely to be taken in the upcoming special Cabinet session.

Until the government finalises its stand on internal reservation, the chief minister has instructed that no department should proceed with recruitment for any posts, Patil said.

"We cannot do anything until then," he added.

K'TAKA ASSEMBLY MONSOON SESSION

There are a total of 21,860 sanctioned posts in medical colleges, out of which 9,413 have been filled, leaving 12,447 vacant, he said.

"No college or hospital is currently facing any problems. If any issue is brought to our notice, it will be resolved immediately," the minister claimed. Earlier, medical colleges in Yadgir, Raichur, Kalaburagi and a few other places faced staff shortages, but these have now been addressed, he added. Directors of medical colleges and the heads of the respective hospitals have been instructed to appoint staff on an outsourcing basis wherever needed, he said. —*Salar News*

**IDBI AGAINST PRIVATISATION**

Members of the United Forum of IDBI officers and employees protest against the proposed sale of IDBI Bank to private/foreign players by the government of India and LIC, at Freedom Park in Bengaluru, on Monday **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

## D'sthala: SIT given police powers

**DHARMASTHALA, 11 AUG**

State Home Minister, G Parameshwara, announced on Monday that the Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the mass burial case in Dharmasthala has been granted police station powers. This amendment allows individuals with complaints related to the case to approach the SIT directly, bypassing local police stations.

The SIT is probing the allegations of mass murder, rape, and mass burials in Dharmasthala spanning the past two decades.

Parameshwara said, "Instead of going to the police station to register complaints, people can now directly approach the SIT."

Initial locations identified by the complainant have increased from 13 to between 16 and 19, with skeletal remains discovered at two sites thus far.

Meanwhile, the SIT has begun inspections using Ground Penetrating Radar technology. The SIT, accompanied by GPR specialists, moved to the 13th site identified by the complainant, located near the Netravati bathing ghat.

The GPR survey marks a significant step in the probe, officials said. —*PTI*

## State reinstates Ranya Rao's father as DGP

**BENGALURU, 11 AUG**

The State government has lifted the compulsory leave imposed on Director General of Police K Ramachandra Rao, who was linked to a gold smuggling case involving his stepdaughter, Ranya Rao.

On Monday he was reassigned as Director General of Police for the Directorate of Civil Rights Enforcement, a position equivalent to that of Director General of the CID.

Rao was questioned by a State-appointed inquiry committee led by Additional Chief Secretary Gaurav Gupta after Ranya was arrested at Kempegowda International Airport on 3 March for allegedly attempting to smuggle 14.2kg of gold worth Rs 12.56 crore. During the inquiry, it was revealed that Ranya reportedly misused police escorts to avoid customs checks.

Following the case, Rao was placed on mandatory leave on 15 March. The Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms issued a notification on Monday, stating that Rao's leave had been revoked with immediate effect.

- It was previously alleged that actress Ranya Rao, who was caught attempting to smuggle gold at Kempegowda International Airport had tried to use her step-father's name, K Ramachandra Rao, and requested police escorts to her residence as a means of slipping through airport security

It had previously been alleged that Ranya identified herself as the DGP's daughter upon arrival at the airport, requesting police escorts to her residence.

—*Agencies*

## EC reiterates ultimatum to Rahul over 'vote chori'

**NEW DELHI, 11 AUG**

After Sunday's notice issued by the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of State, the Election Commission reiterated that Congress leader Rahul Gandhi still has time to submit a declaration to the body. The CEO of Haryana also issued a reminder Gandhi.

The State CEO had issued a notice to the Congress MP on Sunday, asking him to submit proof so the body could probe his "vote theft" allegations.

Gandhi had claimed that a voter, Shakun Rani, voted twice based on data shown by a polling officer.

However, the polling body responded preliminary inquiry, Shakun Rani has denied voting twice. The CEO's office also found that the tick-marked document presented by Rahul Gandhi was not issued by the polling officer.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday accused the BJP-led Central government of "weaponising" police against the INDIA bloc MPs instead of "addressing rot" in the electoral system.

His remarks came after the Delhi Police detained INDIA bloc MPs, including Gandhi, for protesting against the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in poll-bound Bihar and allegation the "voter fraud".

"The cowardly Narendra Modi Govt and a compromised EC have completely lost the plot," Siddaramaiah wrote on X.

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar questioned the EC for sending Gandhi a notice."Who are they to give notice?" he questioned. —*PTI*

**DASARA JUMBOS CHECK WEIGHT**

The first batch of nine Dasara elephants underwent a weight check on Monday in Mysuru, ahead of the celebrations. They will get special nutritious diet until the procession to maintain their weight and stamina **PHOTO: SALAR**

## STATE GST TAX EVASION SOARS TO RS 39,577 CRORE IN FY25

**NEW DELHI, 11 AUG**

Central GST officers in the State uncovered staggering tax evasion amounting to Rs 39,577 crore in the 2024-25 fiscal year, marking an over five-fold increase compared to the previous year. In a written response to the Lok Sabha, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman stated, "Central GST authorities have not issued any notices based on UPI transactions."

This statement comes on the heels of a wave of disproportionately high GST notices received by numerous small traders and shopkeepers in Bengaluru, largely driven by their digital footprints, including UPI transactions, issued by State GST field offices.

Sitharaman detailed that 1,254 cases of Goods and Services Tax (GST) evasion had been detected by Central GST officers in Karnataka during the period.

The response further revealed that nine individuals were arrested, and Rs 1,623 crore was collected via voluntary payments.

In contrast, the previous fiscal year (2023-24) saw only 925 cases involving Rs 7,202 crore in evasion, with just two arrests and Rs 1,197 crore collected voluntarily.

The trend indicates a significant escalation in tax evasion cases, raising concerns among authorities regarding compliance and enforcement. —*PTI*

## Man beaten to death by friends for ₹500 in Belagavi

**BELAGAVI, 11 AUG**

A 45-year old man was beaten to death by his friends for just Rs 500 in Belagavi on Monday, Police Commissioner Bhushan Borase said. The victim, Hussian Tasewale from Pratap galli, was murdered by Mithun Mahadev and Manoj Ingale of the same locality.

The accused visited Tasewale's house at around midnight on Sunday, demanding that he repaid the Rs 500 which Mahadev had loaned to the victim to get scrap iron. Tasewale was engaged in the scrap business. They then threatened Tasewale and his mother, Borase said.

After a heated argument, Mahadev and Ingale trashed Tasewale's hands, kicked him and smashed his head to the wall. Tasewale fell unconscious and they fled the scene.

Tasewale's mother, with the help of a neighbour, managed to take him to a government hospital, where he breathed his last on Monday morning. Borase said that Tasewale died because of severe injures to his internal organs.

The mother said that her son was thrashed nearly for an hour. He was hit badly on his hands, they pulled his hair and banged his head against the wall. They kicked when he fell down. —*Salar News*

The victim, Hussian Tasewale (centre) and the accused **PHOTO: SALAR**

**OVER AN AFFAIR?**

## *Dentist held for chopping his mother-in-law into pieces*

**TUMAKURU, 11 AUG**

Police cracked the Lakshmi Devi murder case in Koratagere in Tumakuru and arrested victim's son-in-law, a dentist, Dr Ramachandrappa S and his two accomplices.

Tumakuru police recovered the severed head of a woman and her partially decomposed, dismembered body pieces, found stuffed in multiple plastic bags, along the road at Kolala village in Koratagere.

Koratagere police officials said initially on 7 August, seven covers with the woman's body parts stuffed were brought to their notice by passersby. Later, Koratagere police combed the crime spot and found seven more plastic bags stuffed with body parts and the head on 8 August.

They fixed the identity of the woman, Lakshmi Devi, 42,

with the help of the head.

The police found Lakshmi Devi brutally murdered and chopped into 19 pieces.

To trace the accused in the case, the Superintendent of Police Ashok KV formed a team which investigated and arrested Ramachandrappa, Satish KN and Kiran KS, all residents of Tumakuru.

During interrogation, the accused confessed that they had murdered Lakshmi Devi and, with the intention of destroying evidence, cut the dead body into pieces, packed them in plastic covers, and disposed of them at various places, Ashok said on Monday.

Ramachandrappa reportedly committed the crime because he believed that Lakshmi Devi was having an illicit relationship, causing him embarrassment. —*PTI*

Joyalukkas inaugurated a grand new showroom in Marthandam in Tamil Nadu. The showroom was inaugurated by Tamil Nadu Milk & Dairy Development Minister Mano Thangaraj in the presence of Vilavancode MLA Tharahai Cuthbert, Kuzhithurai Municipal Chairman Pon Asai Thambi, Kuzhithurai Municipality Ward Councillor Selva Kumari, Merchant Association President Sunder Raj, actress and model Malvika Sharma, Joyalukkas Executive Director Thomas Mathew, Joyalukkas COO Henry George, Joyalukkas Retail DGM Rajesh Krishnan, Marketing DGM Anish Varghese and other dignitaries

# 8 Bills passed after Rijiju's ultimatum to Oppn

## Union minister warns disrupting Opposition that House would pass bills without discussion

**NEW DELHI, 11 AUG**

The Parliament on Monday passed eight Bills as Union minister Kiren Rijiju slammed the opposition parties for repeated disruptions of both the Houses of Parliament and announced that the government would proceed with the legislative agenda without their participation.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Rijiju also hinted at an early end of the Monsoon session, contending that the Congress and other opposition parties were not interested in allowing Parliament to function.

The session that began on 21 June, witnessed disruptions for 14 days, barring a two-day discussion on Operation Sindoor and the Pahalgam terror attack. It is commence last till 21 August.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Rijiju also hinted at an early end of the Monsoon session *PHOTO: PTI*

- The Lok Sabha passed four Bills – The National Sports Governance Bill, The National Anti-Doping (Amendment) Bill, The Income-Tax (No 2) Bill and Taxation Laws (Amendment) Bill – amid protests from the Opposition on the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar

The Lok Sabha passed four Bills – The National Sports Governance Bill, The National Anti-Doping (Amendment) Bill, The Income-Tax (No 2) Bill and Taxation Laws (Amendment) Bill – amid protests from the Opposition on the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar.

Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya described the National Sports Governance Bill as the "single biggest reform in Indian sports that will ensure accountability, justice and good governance in sports federations.

The Rajya Sabha passed The Readjustment of Representation of Scheduled Tribes in Assembly Constituencies of the State of Goa Bill and The Merchant Shipping Bill, and also returned the Manipur Appropriation Bill and The Manipur Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill, which were already passed by the Lok Sabha.

Rijiju said that the Parliament would pass important bills as it cannot allow its time to be wasted.

The minister said the government was keen to discuss important Bills, but repeated disruptions over one issue led to adjournments of both Houses of Parliament.

Opposition parties have been demanding a rollback of the SIR of electoral rolls in Bihar ahead of the assembly elections this year.

He said the Opposition has no trust in the Supreme Court, the Election Commission or Parliament.

The poll authority had called a 30-member delegation comprising members from all parties to discuss of electoral roll revision in Bihar.

The minister said he was making a last appeal to the Opposition, and the government will pass Bills without their participation.

"You participate in discussions. Don't say later that you were not allowed to participate in the debate," Rijiju said. *—PTI*

## SIR can rid voters' list of ghost voters, says Himanta

**GUWAHATI, 11 AUG**

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has raised concerns over the presence of deceased individuals and residents from other areas on the state's electoral rolls. He noted that despite these discrepancies, 100 per cent voter turnout has been reported in certain regions. Sarma emphasized that a Special Intensive Revision (SIR) could help rectify these anomalies by matching voter details with Aadhaar numbers. Criticising Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's opposition to the SIR in Bihar, Sarma questioned how the Congress could claim electoral victories in states like Himachal Pradesh and Karnataka if the voter lists were indeed flawed. "He should engage with the EC to address these issues," Sarma said. *—PTI*

*PHOTO: ANI*

## Raut rues 'missing' Dhankar, writes to Amit Shah

**NEW DELHI, 11 AUG**

Shiv Sena-UBT leader Sanjay Raut has expressed concern over the whereabouts of former Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar, who resigned unexpectedly on 21 July. In a letter to Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Raut asked for clarity regarding Dhankhar's health and safety, stating that attempts to contact him have failed. "There is no information about his current location... Some Rajya Sabha members are considering a writ petition of Habeas Corpus, worried for his wellbeing," Raut noted. Party chief Uddhav Thackeray had also questioned Dhankhar's absence. "Where is the former vice president now? This should be discussed," Thackeray insisted. *—PTI*

## Centre's ad budget up by 84% since 2020-21: TMC

**NEW DELHI, 11 AUG**

The Trinamool Congress (TMC) has pointed out a staggering 84 per cent rise in the Union government's advertising expenditure from 2020-21 to 2024-25. TMC leader Derek O'Brien condemned the government's failure to provide direct answers in Parliament, stating, "Instead of addressing queries, they redirect MPs to browse websites." Analysis of data revealed that the ad expenditure spiked significantly to Rs 656.08 crore in 2023-24, highlighting a pattern that seems to prioritise publicity over accountability. O'Brien remarked, "The Prime Minister has become the Public Relations Minister, avoiding transparency and civility in Parliament." *—PTI*

*PHOTO: ANI*

## BJP files 'missing person' complaint against Priyanka

**WAYANAD, 11 AUG**

A BJP leader has lodged a "missing person" complaint against Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi, following a similar complaint against Union Minister Suresh Gopi. Palliyara Mukundan, leader of the BJP's Scheduled Tribe Morcha, submitted the complaint alleging that Gandhi has been absent from her constituency for three months, particularly from the landslide-affected Chooralmala-Mundakai areas. Mukundan stated that Gandhi has failed to engage with the tribal community's pressing issues. The previous day, Kerala Students' Union leader Gokul Guruvayoor accused Gopi of being "inaccessible" and lacking a presence in his district during recent critical events. *—PTI*

# Oppn alleges 'murder of democracy'

**NEW DELHI, 11 AUG**

Congress General secretary Jairam Ramesh on Monday accused the government of "murdering democracy" after Delhi Police halted a protest march by opposition MPs headed to the Election Commission (EC). The march aimed to submit a memorandum on alleged manipulation of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar.

"Our demand from the EC was very clear — all opposition MPs wished to peacefully present a memorandum. We didn't ask for a delegation. Now we're not even allowed to reach Nirvachan Sadan. This is democracy being assaulted right outside Parliament," said Ramesh, criticising what he termed a "cheeky" response from the EC.

The protest began at Parliament's Makar Dwar, where MPs sang the national anthem before proceeding. They wore white caps with red crosses over the words 'SIR' and 'vote chori' and carried banners reading "SIR + Vote Theft = Murder of Democracy" and "SIR - Loktantra Par Vaar".

MPs raised slogans against the EC and accused it of aiding the ruling BJP by manipulating electoral rolls in Bihar ahead of the state elections. Posters reading "SIR par chuppi kyun?" and "Vote chori bandh karo" were prominently displayed.

TMC MPs Mahua Moitra and Sushmita Dev raise slogans as Samajwadi Party MP Akhilesh Yadav jumps over police barricades during a protest by Opposition leaders over the 'poll fraud' issue in New Delhi on Monday *PHOTO: PTI*

Leaders from over a dozen opposition parties joined the march, including the Congress, DMK, RJD, Left parties, TMC, AAP, SP, and NCP-SP. Many expressed concern that the EC was acting under pressure from the Centre and undermining public trust in electoral processes.

Opposition parties have also been raising the issue in both Houses of Parliament, demanding accountability from the EC and transparency in the revision process. The Election Commission has not issued an official statement as of now.

**Tharoor slams EC over criticism of Rahul**

Congress MP Shashi Tharoor hit out at the Election Commission (EC). Participating in the protest, Tharoor said "what we want is answers, not attacks".

The Election Commission should address the "serious doubts" that have been raised in people's mind because the integrity of the electoral system is credible, essential and vital for our own democracy, he said. *—PTI*

**GOVT HITS BACK**

# 'Munir shows Pakistan is irresponsible with nukes'

**NEW DELHI, 11 AUG**

Pakistan Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir's nuclear threat from the US soil showed that the neighbouring country is an "irresponsible" nuclear state and there is a danger of the weapons falling into the hands of non-state actors, government sources said on Monday.

Addressing the Pakistani diaspora in Florida's Tampa, Munir reportedly made the nuclear threat in case his country faced an existential threat in a future war with India.

The Pakistani Army Chief also warned that Islamabad would destroy Indian infrastructure, if they hit water flow to Pakistan.

"We are a nuclear nation. If we think we are going down, we'll take half the world down with us," he said

Whenever the US supports the Pakistan military, they always show their true colours of aggression, the sources said.

It is a symptom that democracy does not exist in Pakistan and it is their military which controls the country, they said.

Munir is currently on a visit to the US, his second in two months.

*PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA*

- Addressing the Pakistani diaspora in Florida's Tampa, Munir reportedly made the nuclear threat in case his country faced an existential threat in a future war with India

His comments are reflective of Pakistan's record of nuclear sabre rattling while trying to pass itself off as a responsible nuclear actor, the sources said. The remarks also demonstrated that the real nuclear instability in South Asia comes from a military that has its hand on the nuclear button rather than a civilian authority, they added.

Munir also repeated his earlier remarks that Kashmir is the "jugular vein" of Pakistan. *—PTI*

# China plans Xinjiang-Tibet rail link near LAC: Report

**BEIJING, 11 AUG**

China is set to embark on a major infrastructure project, constructing a railway link between Xinjiang province and Tibet, with segments running close to the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with India.

Construction is slated to begin this year, overseen by the newly established Xinjiang-Tibet Railway Company (XTRC), which has a capital of 95 billion yuan (USD 13.2 billion) and is entirely owned by China State Railway Group.

The goal is to create a 5,000km rail framework centred on Lhasa by 2035. "Parts of the route will also run near the China-India LAC, giving it defensive importance in a frontier area with less infrastructure than the rest of China," reported the South China Morning Post.

Notably, the Xinjiang-Tibet Railway is one of four planned lines connecting Tibet to other provinces, with the Qinghai-Tibet line already operational.

The plan is significant, coming after recent normalisation of China-India relations post a military standoff in Eastern Ladakh. Additionally, construction of a major dam over the Brahmaputra River in Tibet has raised concerns in downstream countries India and Bangladesh. *—PTI*

# PM inaugurates flats for MPs

**NEW DELHI, 11 AUG**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated a new multi-storey residential complex for Members of Parliament (MPs) on Monday, featuring 184 type-VII flats near Parliament House. Modi highlighted the importance of celebrating India's diverse festivals and promoting cleanliness among the residences, suggesting that MPs engage their constituents in these celebrations.

Taking a jab at rivals, he dismissed any interpretations of the naming of one tower after the Kosi River, stating it represents unity. Modi pointed out the historical shortage of MP housing and noted that his government has built approximately 350 residences since taking office in 2014.

The modern flats, each exceeding 5,000 sq ft, promise comfort, sustainability, and efficiency, enabling lawmakers to focus on public issues rather than housing challenges. The complex is equipped with green technology, is earthquake-resistant, and features a robust security system to ensure safety. Modi also proposed cleanliness competitions among the buildings to further enhance community spirit. *—PTI*

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurates newly constructed flats for MPs in New Delhi on Monday *PHOTO: PTI*

## Outsourcing is against social justice: CPI(M)

**CHENNAI, 11 AUG**

The CPI(M), a key ally of Tamil Nadu's ruling DMK, on Monday said the concept of outsourcing went against social justice and urged the state government to abandon it and treat vacancies under state services as openings for permanent jobs and recruit personnel through the public service commission.

Referring to the protest here by conservancy workers for over 10 days opposing privatisation of sanitation operations by Chennai Corporation, 'Theekathir,' the official organ of the CPI(M) said in an editorial that the party's Tamil Nadu State Secretary, P Shanmugam has met the workers and has extended support to them.

Usurping the rights of workers in the name of privatisation, consolidated pay and so on cannot be accepted, Shanmugam has said.

The workers, seeking permanent jobs, oppose outsourcing mooted in areas including Tondiarpet in Chennai. They continue to protest in front of Ripon Buildings, the headquarters of the Chennai Corporation.

The parties, including CPI(M) have strongly supported the conservancy workers who oppose privatisation.

"In Madurai Corporation too, conservancy work has been handed over to a private firm," the Marxist party's Tamil mouthpiece said, adding several protests have been staged opposing the private company that has been exploiting the workers. *—PTI*

**WEATHER RADAR GLITCH**

# *KC Venugopal says flight came close to tragedy; AI refutes claim*

**NEW DELHI, 11 AUG**

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation on Monday said Air India's flight from Thiruvananthapuram to Delhi was diverted to Chennai on 10 August due to suspected malfunctioning of the aircraft's weather radar, which landed safely, with some Parliamentarians onboard the plane flagging safety concerns.

Air India said the flight was diverted to Chennai following a suspected technical issue, while senior Congress leader KC Venugopal claimed the flight came "frighteningly close to tragedy".

BJP IT Department head Amit saying that if Venugopal claims an Air India flight had to abort landing in Chennai because another aircraft was on the runway and the airline immediately contradicts him, then one of them is misrepresenting facts.

KC Venugopal *PHOTO: ANI*

The DGCA provided a detailed statement saying the A320 aircraft VT-TNL during the flight encountered moderate turbulent conditions.

To avoid overweight landing and burn extra fuel, the aircraft with clearance from the Air Traffic Controller (ATC) orbited 25 nautical miles northeast of Chennai for 43 minutes.

The aircraft was instructed to carry out a missed approach by ATC as departing Gulf Air flight GFA053 reported debris on left side of runway. On inspection, nothing was observed on the runway.

The flight AI2455, scheduled for departure at 19:15 hours, was delayed by 49 minutes due to the late arrival of the aircraft from Delhi, and took off from Thiruvananthapuram.

The airline said all the affected passengers were accommodated on alternate flights to Delhi and that the aircraft has also resumed commercial operations.

Venugopal said on X, "We were saved by skill and luck... ..I urge @DGCAIndia and @MoCA_GoI to investigate this incident urgently." *—PTI*

# Kerala Guv's 'Partition Horror Day' sparks row

**T'PURAM, 11 AUG**

A row erupted in Kerala on Monday over the Kerala Raj Bhavan's reported circular to universities in the state to observe 14 August as "Partition Horror Day".

State Education Minister V Sivankutty and Leader of the Opposition V D Satheesan questioned the Governor's authority to issue such a circular without the approval of the Council of Ministers.

A Raj Bhavan official confirmed that a circular for the observance of an "Anti-Partition Day" had been issued in June.

The official also clarified that the circular was based on instructions from the Union Home Ministry that it should be observed by all state governments to raise awareness of the horrors of partition.

Reacting to the circular, Sivankutty alleged that Governor Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar had issued it as though operating a "parallel governance system," without the approval of the Council of Ministers elected by the people.

Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar *PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA*

"I do not understand under what authority he has issued such an invitation. He does not have such powers. The Governor's powers are limited, and this is not something that can be connected to day-to-day administration," the minister told a news channel.

In a statement, Satheesan sought to know what authority the Governor had to instruct university vice-chancellors, through a circular, to observe a "Partition Horror Day," thereby effectively sidelining the state government. *—PTI*

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

## Daggubati appears before ED in online betting case

HYDERABAD, 11 AUG

Actor Rana Daggubati on Monday appeared before the Enforcement Directorate (ED) here in connection with a money laundering case involving illegal online betting and gambling by certain platforms. The federal agency issued summons to four actors, Prakash Raj, Vijay Deverakonda, Rana Daggubati and Lakshmi Manchu, asking them to appear at its zonal office here for questioning under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act. Raj and Deverakonda earlier appeared before the ED. The actors had endorsed online betting apps allegedly involved in generating illicit funds, worth crores of rupees.The ED registered a case against these actors and several other celebrities and social media influencers. —*PTI*

## BMC protects pigeon shelter, steps up security

MUMBAI, 11 AUG

Following protests where demonstrators removed a tarpaulin from a pigeon feeding spot in Dadar, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has once again covered it with plastic sheets. "Security has been heightened to prevent law and order issues," officials stated. On 6 August, protestors clashed with police while removing the cover aimed at discouraging pigeon feeding. Maharashtra minister Mangal Prabhat Lodha asserted the Jain community was not involved and dismissed religious claims. The BMC's ban on public feeding has sparked controversy, especially since the Bombay High Court has yet to issue any directive to close kabutarkhanas. The officials now monitor the site with increased vigilance. —*PTI*

## Five booked for raping teenager in Mumbai

MUMBAI, 11 AUG

A 15-year-old girl was allegedly gang-raped by five individuals over three months in central Mumbai, police reported on Monday. A 25-year-old man was arrested and four juveniles were detained following the complaint. The incident was uncovered early on Sunday when the girlfriend of one suspect confronted the victim about a relationship. Upon reviewing their daughter's mobile phone, the girl's parents discovered incriminating videos and messages, prompting them to inform the police. Following their report, a case was filed against the accused under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act. —*PTI*

## Over 40 held for rhino poaching in Assam

GUWAHATI, 11 AUG

"Operation Falcon," initiated in Assam to combat rhino poaching, has resulted in over 40 arrests and the identification of several gangs linked to international networks. Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma shared a video highlighting the operation's achievements, declaring it crucial for "breaking the back of poaching and illegal animal trade." The initiative was launched in 2024 after two rhinos were killed, prompting a reassessment of poaching strategies. Authorities have deployed ground and digital intelligence, uncovering six major poaching gangs tied to trade routes extending to Myanmar and thwarting nine poaching attempts. So far, 42 individuals have been arrested across districts. The ongoing operation aims to completely eradicate poaching in Assam. —*PTI*

# SC bins Army policy curbing JAG slots for women officers

### Merit, not gender, must be the basis of selection, says SC

BENGALURU, 11 AUG

The Supreme Court on Monday struck down a policy of the Army restricting the appointment of women officers to the Judge Advocate General (JAG) branch, stating that merit and not gender should be the basis of selection and appointment to a particular position.

A Bench of Justices Dipankar Datta and Manmohan said a policy dividing candidates on the basis of gender and reserving more posts for men cannot meet the standards approved by law.

Section 12 of the Army Act, 1950 grants exception to women and allows them to join branches like the JAG. The JAG department's prime duty is to offer legal advice to the Army.

The apex court said that the Army should give priority to merit and excellence, irrespective of gender, at the time of selections to a particular post.

"The executive cannot restrict numbers and/or make reservation for male officers under the pretence of induction by way of policy or administrative instructions," the Court observed.

The court stated that the notification that offered women only three posts compared to the double the number of vacancies available for men would violate the very foundation of the fundamental right to equality.

The Court further opined that the criteria for selection and parameters for testing for both men and women were the same in JAG, though they may be posted in different positions. The conditions of service in the Army did not differ for men and women.

- A Bench of Justices Dipankar Datta and Manmohan said a policy dividing candidates on the basis of gender and reserving more posts for men cannot meet the standards approved

The Court said the Union Government should allocate 50% of the vacancies for women in the JAG branch, noting that only one half of the population can never lead a nation in the world in the path of progress. —*Agencies*

DEFAMATION CASE

# SC confirms conviction of Medha Patkar

NEW DELHI, 11 AUG

The Supreme Court on Monday confirmed the conviction of activist Medha Patkar in a 25-year-old defamation case filed by Delhi Lieutenant Governor, VK Saxena.

The court said it was not inclined to interfere with the Delhi high court order that released Patkar on "probation of good conduct" but required her to appear before the trial court once every three years, either physically, through video-conferencing or be represented through the lawyer.

However, setting aside the penalty, the court stated that the supervision order would not be given effect.

The high court had upheld the conviction and punishment awarded to Patkar. Saxena filed the case in 2000 when he was heading an NGO in Gujarat, alleging that Patkar

It had said that Patkar failed to demonstrate any defects in the procedure which was followed or any error in the law, which resulted in the miscarriage of justice.

Upholding Patkar's release on "probation of good conduct," it directed Patkar to appear before the trial court The Narmada Bachao Andolan leader challenged the sessions court order upholding her conviction, which had released her on furnishing a probation bond of Rs 25,000 and imposed a precondition of depositing Rs 1 lakh as fine. —*PTI*

## SC asks litigant to apologise to T'gana HC judge

The Supreme Court on Monday directed a litigant and his lawyers to tender an unconditional apology to a Telangana High Court judge against whom they levelled "scurrilous allegations." N Peddi Raju alleged bias against the high court judge for quashing a criminal case against Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy. HC judges are constitutional functionaries with immunity, the court said. —*PTI*

## SC junks PIL, calls it publicity interest litigation

The Supreme Court on Monday refused to hear a PIL for directions to state election commissions (SEC) to take steps to curb alleged illegal activities of political parties that could undermine "sovereignty, integrity, and unity of the country". The court termed the PIL by Ghanshyam Dayalu Upadhyay as a publicity interest litigation. —*PTI*

# Toddler beaten & bitten at Noida daycare; maid held

A video grab of the child being tortured PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

NOIDA, 11 AUG

A purported video of a daycare in Uttar Pradesh's Noida went viral showing a maid assaulting a toddler and banging her head on the wall, with the toddler's mother alleging that bite marks were seen on her thighs. The police has taken the maid into custody.

The incident took place on 4 August at the daycare named BLIPEE in Sector 137.

Police have taken the maid into custody and registered an FIR on 7 August.

The maid was accused of hitting the baby with a plastic bat and dropping her to the floor.

The infant's mother in her FIR said that her 15-month-old daughter had been crying when she picked her up from the daycare. On checking her, she found marks on both her thighs. She then took her to the doctor, where confirmed that the marks were from bites.

The next day the mother checked the CCTV footage of the daycare and found that the maid had slapped physically assaulted the toddler and had thrown her on the floor.

When she complained about the incident to the daycare head, Charu and the maid, they both misbehaved with her and threatened her.

Investigations are underway. —*PTI*

## Rapist Asaram's bail extended yet again

JODHPUR, 11 AUG

The Jodhpur bench of the Rajasthan High court on Monday extended till August 29, the interim bail granted to jailed self-styled godman Asaram, who is serving life term for raping a minor disciple at his gurukul. Asaram's had been granted bail several times. The Gujarat High court recently extended his interim bail in a similar case till 21 August. —*PTI*

# Stealth frigates Udaygiri, Himagiri to be commissioned

VISAKHAPATNAM, 11 AUG

The Indian Navy is set to commission two advanced frontline frigates, Udaygiri (F35) and Himagiri (F34), on August 26 here, Eastern Naval Command officials said.

The commissioning of these two frigate warships will mark the first time that two major surface combatants from two prestigious Indian shipyards are being commissioned at the same time at Visakhapatnam.

"Indian Navy is preparing for the simultaneous commissioning of two advanced frontline frigates - Udaygiri (F35) and Himgiri (F34) - on 26 August," said a press release issued late on Sunday.

According to the Eastern Naval Command (ENC), Udaygiri is the second ship from Project 17A stealth frigates and was built by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) in Mumbai.

While Himagiri is the first of P17A ship to being constructed by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata. Both the frigates represent a generational leap over earlier designs.

Displacing about 6,700 tons, the P17A class frigates are roughly five per cent larger than their predecessor Shivalik-class frigates, incorporating a sleeker form with a reduced radar cross section, said the press release. —*PTI*

Indian Navy's advanced frontline frigate Himgiri (F34) ahead of its commissioning in Visakhapatnam PHOTO: PTI

# No assistance after accident; man ties wife's body to bike

NAGPUR, 11 AUG

A 35-year-old man was forced to tie his wife's body to his motorcycle after she was run over by a speeding truck on a highway in Maharashtra's Nagpur, as no passing vehicle came to his aid, police said on Monday.

A video of the heartbreaking incident, which took place on the Nagpur-Jabalpur national highway on August 9, has surfaced on social media.

The police reportedly shot the video before they stopped the two-wheeler.

According to the police, Amit Yadav, who hails from Madhya Pradesh's Seoni district, was travelling with his wife Gyarsi, from Lonara in Nagpur to their village Karanpur in the neighbouring state, when a speeding truck hit their motorcycle.

- According to the police, Amit Yadav was travelling with his wife Gyarsi, from Lonara in Nagpur to their village Karanpur in the neighbouring state, when a speeding truck hit their motorcycle

As Gyarsi fell on the road, the truck ran over her and sped away, they said.

Although Yadav pleaded for help from passing motorists, none of them stopped. A police van later intercepted the bike and took the body to the Indira Gandhi Medical College in Nagpur for autopsy. —*PTI*

The police shot the video before they stopped the two-wheeler PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

## 13-year-old girl immolates self in Odisha, dies

BHUBANESHWAR, 11 AUG

A 13-year-old girl in Bargarh district, Odisha, has died after allegedly setting herself on fire. She succumbed to her injuries at the Veer Surendra Sai Institute of Medical Sciences and Research (VIMSAR) in Burla.

Bolangir Superintendent of Police Abilash G confirmed that the police have registered an unnatural death case based on her family's complaint. A team of three officers is investigating the incident and has recovered a related video.

The girl was reportedly staying in a hostel but had come to visit her maternal uncle before she was found in a half-burnt state at a local football ground. —*PTI*

## Ambulance stuck in traffic; Woman dies on way to hospital

ALGHAR, 11 AUG

A woman tragically lost her life after an ambulance transporting her got stuck in a severe traffic jam, with her husband left to carry her body when no one helped.

Chhaaya Purav, 49, was seriously injured by a falling tree while attending an event at her former school in Saphala on 31 July. Witnesses reported that she had been watching a tree being chopped down when it unexpectedly collapsed, resulting in critical head and rib injuries.

Initially taken to a local hospital, her condition necessitated a transfer to Hinduja Hospital in Mumbai, approximately 100km away. Her husband, Kaushik, accompanied her in the ambulance, which left at around 3pm. However, the vehicle soon became stuck in massive traffic on NH-48.

Chhaaya's suffering intensified during their agonising four-hour journey, exacerbated by the gridlocked roads and potholes. By the time the ambulance diverted to Orbit Hospital in Mira Road, her pulse had ceased. —*PTI*

'STREE SHAKTI' SCHEME

# *AP offers free bus rides to girls, women & transgenders*

AMARAVATI, 11 AUG

All girls, women, and transgender persons holding Andhra Pradesh domicile are eligible for free bus travel under the 'Stree Shakti' scheme, to be launched statewide on 15 August, principal secretary (Transport, Roads & Buildings) Kantilal Dande said on Monday.

The beneficiaries with domicile status in Andhra Pradesh can avail the services, subject to presenting valid identity proof, a government order stated.

The scheme will be implemented using the existing fleet of the Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (APSRCT), with additional buses to be procured based on demand. Free travel will apply only to Pallevelugu, Ultra Pallevelugu, City Ordinary, Metro Express, and Express services.

It will not cover non-stop services, interstate operations, contract carriages, chartered services or package tours. Saptagiri Express, Ultra Deluxe, Super Luxury, Star Liner, and all air-conditioned services are also excluded.

The scheme will be implemented using the existing fleet of the Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation PHOTO: ANI

For passenger safety, the government is considering equipping staff with body-worn cameras and installing CCTV cameras in all buses.

Bus stations will see upgraded amenities such as fans, chairs, drinking water and toilets.

Dande said the procurement of electric buses and extending the scheme to them could also be considered, subject to Cabinet approval.

Beneficiaries will receive zero-fare tickets, which APSRTC will submit to the government for reimbursement.

Free bus travel for women was a poll promise of the TDP-led NDA government ahead of the 2024 elections.

The scheme, worth Rs 1,942 crore annually, aims to empower women by improving access to education, jobs, and mobility, Andhra Pradesh Minister K Parthasarathy had earlier said. —*PTI*

# The Lumineers to rock Delhi-NCR on 1 Feb

NEW DELHI, 11 AUG

American folk-rock band The Lumineers is set to perform in India as part of their 'The Automatic World Tour'.

The Grammy-nominated group, known for hits such as "Ho Hey", "Cleopatra", "Stubborn Love" and "Ophelia", will perform at Huda Ground in Delhi-NCR on 1 February, 2026.

The concert, produced and promoted by BookMyShow Live, will be the band's only stop in India and is part of their world tour in support of their fifth studio album 'Automatic'.

The Lumineers, led by founding members Wesley Schultz and Jeremiah Fraites, has performed at major venues including Madison Square Garden, London's O2 Arena, Glastonbury and Coachella.

PHOTO: INSTAGRAM

- The concert will be the band's only stop in India and is part of their world tour in support of their fifth studio album 'Automatic'

Tickets for the concert will go on sale at noon on August 13, exclusively on BookMyShow. —*PTI*

## BLAZES SCORCH SCOTLAND

Edinburgh's iconic Arthur's Seat caught fire, disrupting the peak tourism season. Videos show smoke billowing from the landmark, which sits in Holyrood Park near the Scottish Parliament and King Charles' residence. Visitors were evacuated as flames spread up the slopes of the historic site. Scotland joins Southern Europe and North America in facing worsening wildfires. Over 3.53 lakh hectares have burned across Europe in 2025, more than double last year. Greece and France remain on high alert, with fires killing residents and threatening homes ***PHOTO: PTI***

# Hindi, English & the politics over languages in India

In homes across India, language is a daily dance. A young person might speak Odia with their grandparents, switch to English for homework, and stream Hindi songs on YouTube for fun. This multilingual fluency is not unusual, but rather a reflection of the country's rich linguistic heritage.

India is home to thousands of languages and dialects, and far from being a source of confusion, this coexistence is natural and necessary. It is a defining feature of a nation that views linguistic diversity as a strength, not a hurdle.

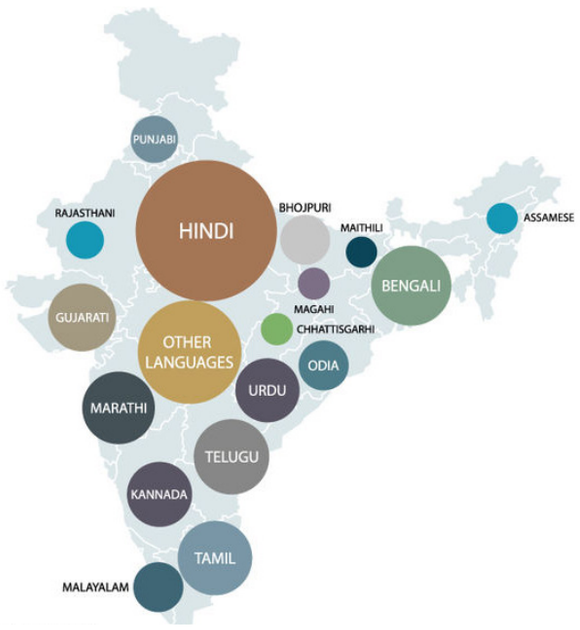
Prime Minister Narendra Modi echoed this sentiment earlier this year during a major literary conference in Maharashtra. "There has never been any animosity among Indian languages," he said. "It is our social responsibility to distance ourselves from such misconceptions and embrace and enrich all languages."

In Maharashtra, where 84 million out of a population of 112 million speak Marathi as their first language and Hindi is a distant second, Modi's words were both timely and pointed. He emphasised that Indian languages have historically influenced one another, and their collective richness should be celebrated.

Yet language in India is not only cultural; it is political. Modi and his government have faced criticism for policies and remarks seen as promoting Hindi at the expense of other languages. In a nation as linguistically diverse as India, language policy is rarely straightforward.

According to the 2011 census, India has about 19,500 languages or dialects spoken as mother tongues. Among these, 22 are officially recognised under the Constitution. Hindi is the most spoken, with around 528 million people, or 44 per cent of the population, using it as their first language. Additionally, about 57 per cent of Indians speak Hindi as a second or third language.

Despite its wide usage, Hindi coexists with many equally significant languages. Bengali is spoken by 97 million people, Telugu by 81 million, Tamil by 69 million and Meitei by 1.8 million. At the national level, Hindi and English are the two official languages. Hindi is used primarily for Central government communication, while English plays a key role in administration, law and global affairs. At the state level, regional languages are used. Tamil Nadu uses Tamil, Maharashtra uses Marathi and so on.




Multilingualism is woven into daily life. Many Indians switch languages depending on context, be it at home, work or in public spaces ***PHOTO: PTI***

Multilingualism is woven into daily life. Many Indians switch languages depending on context, be it at home, work or in public spaces. The 2011 census found that nearly one in four Indians could speak at least two languages, and over 7 per cent could speak three.

To foster this linguistic balance, India introduced the three-language formula in the 1960s. It encouraged students to learn their regional mother tongue, Hindi (if it was not already their first language) and English. The aim was to create a flexible and inclusive framework across states.

In 2020, the Modi government revised this approach with a new National Education Policy (NEP). While giving states more freedom to choose which two Indian languages to teach alongside English, the policy made it mandatory that three languages be included in the curriculum. Critics argue this could introduce Hindi through the backdoor and undermine regional languages.

Another point of contention is the role of English. Though only 10.6 per cent of Indians speak it to some degree, it holds prestige and is often seen as a tool for social mobility, particularly among marginalised communities. At the same time, some see it as a colonial relic. Modi has voiced this view, suggesting English carries historical baggage.

There are those who view English as a bridge between linguistic communities. Others believe efforts to limit English may reinforce social privilege and consolidate Hindi's dominance.

- In homes across India, language is a daily dance. A young person might speak Odia with their grandparents, switch to English for homework, and stream Hindi songs on YouTube for fun. This multilingual fluency is not unusual, but rather a reflection of the country's rich linguistic heritage.

Despite the controversies, the NEP includes provisions to promote English where possible. It calls for bilingual textbooks in English and regional languages, and recommends English instruction alongside mother tongues in primary education.

The government is also working to make India's digital landscape more inclusive. The Bhashini project, launched in 2022, is a national AI initiative aimed at improving speech-to-text tools, real-time translation and digital accessibility across all 22 official languages. The goal is to make digital services available in every major Indian language, particularly benefiting rural and remote areas.

As Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore once wrote, "If God had so wished, he would have made all Indians speak with one language ... the unity of India has been and shall always be a unity in diversity."

Today, Indian children grow up speaking their mother tongue, learning Hindi to connect across regions and acquiring English to engage with the wider world. India's future does not lie in choosing one language over another, but in enabling all of them to thrive together.

A Chinese proverb sums it up well: "To learn a language is to have one more window from which to look at the world." With thousands of such windows, India's strength lies in its ability to see the world through many eyes. *—The Conversation*

SALAR سالار

# On the front lines, peace in Ukraine feels far away

In a dugout near the front lines in eastern Ukraine, every nearby explosion sends dirt cascading from the ceiling and the black plastic lining the walls slipping down. For Ukrainian soldiers stationed there, peace talks feel like a distant fantasy, far removed from the daily thunder of Russian glide bombs and artillery shells.

Buried near the trench is an M777 howitzer, the only reason soldiers risk emerging from cover. There is little on this front to suggest the war will end soon. For many Ukrainian troops, especially those from the 148th Brigade, diplomacy feels disconnected from the battlefield reality.

Their scepticism stems from what they see as broken promises, particularly from the United States. Hopes for a swift resolution have faded. Recent remarks from US President Donald Trump about a possible "swapping of territories", reportedly involving a Ukrainian withdrawal from the Donetsk region, have only deepened mistrust among the soldiers.

Few believe the current diplomatic efforts can bring lasting peace. At best, they say, a ceasefire might be possible. But even that seems remote. More likely, they believe, is a brief pause followed by renewed Russian offensives.

"At minimum, the result would be to stop active fighting, that would be the first sign of some kind of settlement," said Dmytro Loviniukov of the 148th Brigade. "Right now, that's not happening. And while these talks are taking place, they (the Russians) are only strengthening their positions on the front line."

**No end in sight**

On another artillery position nearby, soldiers often talk about life before the war. Many enlisted in the early days of the full-scale invasion, abandoning civilian careers. Some expected their service to be brief. Others did not think of the future at all.

Now, they are in their fourth year of combat. Thousands have been killed. Survivors are stretched thin, with little chance of demobilisation and few new recruits arriving to relieve them. Ukraine's mobilisation efforts have faltered. The army cannot afford to release those still serving without risking collapse at the front.

When direct talks between Russia and Ukraine were held in Istanbul in May, soldiers of the 148th Brigade watched with cautious optimism. That hope has since faded, replaced by dark humour. As a reported deadline from President Trump to Russian leader Vladimir Putin approached, one that later disappeared amid talk of a meeting in Alaska, shelling intensified. Troops joked that the Russians were "meeting the deadline" with fire.

"We are on our land. We have no way back," said artillery commander Loviniukov. "We stand here because there is no choice. No one else will come here to defend us."

**Training for the next fight**

Dozens of kilometres away from the Zaporizhzhia region, heavy fighting grinds on in the Donetsk area, closing in on the city of Pokrovsk. Once home to around 60,000 people, Pokrovsk has endured sustained Russian assault for months. Although Ukrainian forces still control the city, Russian troops have formed a pocket around it, and daily reports of Russian saboteurs attempting to infiltrate the area have become common. The military says these groups have been neutralised.

Near the front, members of the Spartan Brigade continue intensive training. The training ground, 45 kilometres from the frontline, is designed to simulate real combat, complete with forests breaking up fields of blooming sunflowers. The terrain mimics the actual battlefield.

Among those preparing for combat is a 35-year-old soldier with the call sign Komrad. A recent recruit, he has no illusions about the conflict's duration.

"My motivation is that there is simply no way back," he said. "If you are in the military, you have to fight. If we're here, we need to cover our brothers in arms."

**Ceasefire is not peace**

For Serhii Filimonov, commander of the "Da Vinci Wolves" battalion of the 59th Brigade, the war is far from over, regardless of any current discussions. His unit, engaged in the Pokrovsk area, continues to struggle for resources even as diplomatic headlines dominate international coverage.

"We are preparing for a long war. We have no illusions that Russia will stop," he said. "There may be a ceasefire, but there will be no peace."

He dismissed talk of territory exchanges or temporary truces as short-term measures that fail to address Russia's long-term aims.

"Russia will not abandon its goal of capturing all of Ukraine," Filimonov said. "They will attack again. The big question is what security guarantees we get — and how we hit pause."

A soldier from the 68th Brigade, with the call sign Mirche, added that each round of peace talks seems to coincide with intensified Russian attacks around Pokrovsk, Russia's current priority. "Whenever peace talks begin, things on the front get terrifying," he said. *—PTI*

Ukrainian soldiers from air-defence unit of 59th brigade fire at Russian strike drones in Dnipropetrovsk region, Ukraine ***PHOTO: PTI***

## LETTERS

write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

# *In an AI world, seniors' judgement & experience matter more than ever*

Have you ever sat in a meeting where someone half your age casually mentions "prompting ChatGPT" or "running this through AI", and felt a familiar knot in your stomach? You're not alone.

There's a growing narrative that artificial intelligence (AI) is inherently ageist, that older workers will be disproportionately hit by job displacement and are more reluctant to adopt AI tools.

But such assumptions – especially that youth is a built-in advantage when it comes to AI – might not actually hold.

While ageism in hiring is a real concern, if you have decades of work experience, your skills, knowledge and judgement could be exactly what's needed to harness AI's power – without falling into its traps.

**What does the research say?**

The research on who benefits most from AI at work is surprisingly murky, partly because it's still early days for systematic studies on AI and work.

Some research suggests lower-skilled workers might have more to gain than high-skilled workers on certain straightforward tasks.

The picture becomes much less clear under real-world conditions, especially for complex work that relies heavily on judgement and experience.

Through our Skills Horizon research project, where we've been talking to Australian and global senior leaders across different industries, we're hearing a more nuanced story.

Many older workers do experience AI as deeply unsettling. As one US-based CEO of a large multinational corporation told us: "AI can be a form of existential challenge, not only to what you're doing, but how you view yourself."

But leaders are also observing an important and unexpected distinction: experienced workers are often much better at judging the quality of AI outputs.

This might become one of the most important skills, given that AI occasionally hallucinates or gets things wrong.

The CEO of a South American creative agency put it bluntly: "Senior colleagues are using multiple AIs. If they don't have the right solution, they re-prompt, iterate, but the juniors are satisfied with the first answer, they copy, paste and think they're finished. They don't yet know what they are looking for, and the danger is that they will not learn what to look for if they keep working that way."

Many older workers do experience AI as deeply unsettling ***PHOTO: PTI***

**Experience as an AI advantage**

Experienced workers have a crucial advantage when it comes to prompting AI: they understand context and usually know how to express it clearly.

While a junior advertising creative might ask an AI to "Write copy for a sustainability campaign", a seasoned account director knows to specify "Write conversational social media copy for a sustainable fashion brand targeting eco-conscious millennials, emphasising our client's zero-waste manufacturing process and keeping the tone authentic but not preachy".

This skill mirrors what experienced professionals do when briefing junior colleagues or freelancers: providing detailed instructions, accounting for audience, objectives, and constraints. It's a competency developed through years of managing teams and projects.

- There's a crucial difference between using technology frequently and using it well.

Younger workers, despite their comfort with technology, may actually be at a disadvantage here.

There's a crucial difference between using technology frequently and using it well. Many young people may become too accustomed to AI assistance. A survey of US teens this year found 72 per cent had used an AI companion app. Some children and teens are turning to chatbots for everyday decisions.

Without the professional experience to recognise when something doesn't quite fit, younger workers risk accepting AI responses that feel right – effectively "vibing" their work – rather than developing the analytical skills to evaluate AI usefulness.

**So what can you do?**

First, everyone benefits from learning more about AI. In our time educating everyone from students to senior leaders and CEOs, we find that misunderstandings about how AI works have little to do with age.

A good place to start is reading up on what AI is and what it can do for you: What is AI? Where does AI come from? How does AI learn? What can AI do? What makes a good AI prompt? If you're not even sure which AI platform to try, we would recommend testing the most prominent ones, OpenAI's ChatGPT, Anthropic's Claude, and Google's Gemini.

If you're an experienced worker feeling threatened by AI, lean into your strengths. Your decades of experience with delegation, context-setting, and critical evaluation are exactly what AI tools need.

Start small. Pick one regular work task and experiment with AI assistance, using your judgement to evaluate and refine outputs. Practice prompting like you're briefing a junior colleague: be specific about context, constraints, and desired outcomes, and repeat the process as needed.

Most importantly, don't feel threatened. In a workplace increasingly filled with AI-generated content, your ability to spot what doesn't quite fit, and to know what questions to ask, has never been more valuable. *—PTI*

## Heatstroke alert as historic heatwave to hit Israel

**TEL AVIV, 11 AUG**

Israel is bracing for one of its hottest heatwaves in decades, with temperatures soaring early this week. The Israel Meteorological Service predicts that the Jordan Valley may reach 51°C (124°F) on Tuesday and Wednesday, close to the pre-state record of 54°C set in 1942. Areas around the Sea of Galilee could hit 49°C (120°F), while Jerusalem may reach 40°C (104°F). Authorities have made preparations, including closing hiking routes in high-risk zones and advising against outdoor activities in peak temperatures. "Prepare for possible health risks such as dehydration and heatstroke," officials warned. The extreme weather also led to an unusual rescue: police found an illegally kept owl in a parked vehicle. *—ANI*

# Israel kills 5 Al Jazeera journalists in Gaza

### Press advocates describe action as retribution against those documenting war in Gaza

Anas al-Sharif, Ibrahim Zaher, Mohammed Noufal, Moamen Aliwa and Mohammed Qreiqeh ***PHOTO: AL JAZEERA***

**JERUSALEM, 11AUG**

Israel's military killed Al Jazeera journalist Anas al-Sharif and four of his colleagues in a targeted airstrike late Sunday.

Seven people were killed overall in the attack on the tent located outside the main gate of Gaza City's al-Shifa Hospital late on Sunday evening. They include Al Jazeera correspondent Mohammed Qreiqeh and camera operators Ibrahim Zaher, Mohammed Noufal and Moamen Aliwa.

Officials at Shifa Hospital said the strike also damaged the entrance to the hospital complex's emergency building.

Press advocates described as retribution against those documenting the war in Gaza.

Israel's military later Sunday described al-Sharif as the leader of a Hamas cell — an allegation that Al Jazeera and al-Sharif had previously dismissed as baseless.

"STRUCK: Hamas terrorist Anas Al-Sharif, who posed as an Al Jazeera journalist. Al-Sharif was the head of a Hamas terrorist cell and advanced rocket attacks on Israeli civilians and IDF troops," the IDF wrote on X. "Intelligence and documents from Gaza, including rosters, terrorist training lists and salary records, prove he was a Hamas operative integrated into Al Jazeera. A press badge isn't a shield for terrorism".

The incident is the first time during the war that Israel's military has swiftly claimed responsibility after a journalist was killed in a strike. However, the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) has been able to verify the killing of at least 186 journalists since 7 October, 2023. At least 90 journalists have been imprisoned by Israel.

Al Jazeera called the strike "targeted assassination" and accused Israeli officials of incitement, connecting al-Sharif's death to the allegations that both the network and correspondent had repeatedly denied.

"Anas and his colleagues were among the last remaining voices from within Gaza," the Qatari network said in a statement.

In a social media post that Al Jazeera said was written to be posted in case of his death, he bemoaned the devastation and destruction that war had wrought and bid farewell to his wife, son and daughter.

"I never hesitated for a single day to convey the truth as it is, without distortion or falsification," the 28-year-old wrote. *—Agencies*

**"I never hesitated to convey the truth as it is, without distortion or misrepresentation, hoping that God would witness those who remained silent, those who accepted our killing, and those who suffocated our very breaths. Not even the mangled bodies of our children and women moved their hearts or stopped the massacre that our people have been subjected to for over a year and a half**

—Anas al-Sharif, Al Jazeera journalist, in his final message

**We have decided, and I've ordered, directed the military, to bring in foreign journalists, more foreign journalists. There's a problem of assuring security, but I think it can be done in a way that is responsible and careful to preserve your own safety**

— Benjamin Netanyahu, Israeli Prime Minister, hours before strike

## Aus will recognise Palestinian state, says PM Albanese

**WELLINGTON, 11 AUG**

- Australia's government has also criticised Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's recent new military offensive in Gaza

Australia will recognise a Palestinian state, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said Monday, joining the leaders of France, Britain and Canada in signalling they would do so.

His remarks followed weeks of urging from within his Cabinet and from many in Australia to recognise a Palestinian state and amid growing criticism from officials in his government over suffering in Gaza, which Albanese on Monday referred to as a "humanitarian catastrophe."

Australia's government has also criticised Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's recent new military offensive in Gaza.

Albanese told reporters after a Cabinet meeting Monday that Australia's decision to recognise a Palestinian state will be formalised at the United Nations General Assembly in September. The acknowledgement was "predicated on commitments Australia has received from the Palestinian Authority," Albanese said.

Those commitments included no role for Hamas in a Palestinian government, demilitarisation of Gaza and the holding of elections, he said.

"A two-state solution is humanity's best hope to break the cycle of violence in the Middle East and to bring an end to the conflict, suffering and starvation in Gaza," Albanese said. *—PTI*



***PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA***

## US tourist shot dead after Bad Bunny concert

**SAN JUAN, 11 AUG**

In a tragic incident, Kevin Mares, a 25-year-old tourist from New York, was fatally shot early Sunday at La Perla, a coastline community in Puerto Rico. The shooting occurred at around 4.13am when an argument erupted at a venue called "Refuge for Mistreated Men," resulting in several injuries, including Mares, who was an innocent bystander. Police reported that "we have very little information" about the shooter or the reason for the argument. San Juan Mayor Miguel Romero announced that security footage from the area would be shared for investigation. La Perla still struggles with crime, evidenced by past incidents involving tourists. So far, Puerto Rico has recorded 277 killings in 2025, a decrease from the previous year. *—PTI*

## Colombian senator dies weeks after being shot

**BOGOTA, 11 AUG**

Colombian Conservative Senator and Presidential hopeful Miguel Uribe Turbay died Monday, more than two months after being shot during a campaign rally in western Bogota. His wife, María Claudia Tarazona, confirmed the 39-year-old's death early Monday. Uribe Turbay was critically wounded on 7 June during a campaign rally in the country's capital, suffering gunshot wounds to the head and leg. He underwent emergency surgery and remained hospitalized in intensive care until his death. A teenage suspect was arrested at the scene, and authorities have since detained several others. The incident has raised renewed concerns about political violence in the country. *—PTI*

## Indonesia canes 2 men publicly for homosexual acts

**BANDA ACEH, 11 AUG**

An Islamic Shariah court in Aceh, Indonesia, has sentenced two men, aged 20 and 21, to 80 lashes each in public caning for engaging in "sexual acts." The trial was conducted behind closed doors, with judges deeming their behaviour in a city park toilet as inappropriate. The couple was arrested in April after reportedly being seen together, which led residents to alert Sharia police. Aceh is Indonesia's only province applying Islamic Shariah law, predominantly focusing on strict codes of conduct. This verdict marks the fifth instance of public caning related to homosexuality since the law's introduction in 2015. The central Indonesian government has no authority to revoke Shariah law in Aceh, which remains a contentious aspect of the nation's legal framework. *—PTI*

A video grab of a homeless woman in Washington DC ***PHOTO: X***

## Trump aims to drive out homeless people from DC immediately

**WASHINGTON, 11 AUG**

US President Donald Trump vowed to evict homeless people from Washington DC, as his administration looked to clamp down on a perceived increase in crime in the national capital. Trump also deployed about 500 members of the National Guard, saying the city would be "LIBERATED today!"

"The Homeless have to move out, IMMEDIATELY," Trump wrote on Truth Social Sunday. "We will give you places to stay, but FAR from the Capital. The Criminals, you don't have to move out. We're going to put you in jail where you belong."

However, Mayor Muriel Bowser insisted that there was no spike in crime. Police statistics show homicides, robberies and burglaries are all down this year when compared with this time in 2024. Overall violent crime is down 26 per cent compared with this time a year ago.

Trump's actions come after Edward "Big Balls" Coristine, a high-profile member of the Department of Government Efficiency, was assaulted during an attempted car-jacking. Police apprehended two 15-year olds in connection with the incident.

At least 100 FBI agents and 40 agents with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives are assigned to patrol DC. *—PTI*

### US govt to end interview waiver programme

US is set to officially end the Interview Waiver Programme – popularly known as the 'Dropbox' facility – from 2 September, for most of its non-immigrant visa categories, including work, tourist and student visas. Under the new policy, almost all applicants will now have to appear in person before a US consular officer. This means that children under 14 and seniors over 79, who were previously exempt, will now have to appear for in-person interviews.

# US is sick of funding Ukraine war: Vance

**WASHINGTON/NEW YORK, 11 AUG**

- US Vice President JD Vance's reaction comes as a Ukrainian drone attack killed one person and wounded two more in Russia's Nizhny Novgorod on Monday

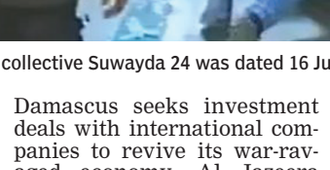
Ahead of US President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin meeting in Alaska to discuss a ceasefire deal, Vice President JD Vance said that Washington is tired of funding the Ukraine war.

"We're done with the funding of the Ukraine war business. We want to bring about a peaceful settlement to this thing," Vance told Fox News's Maria Bartiromo on 'Sunday Morning Futures.'

"Americans, I think, are sick of continuing to send their money, their tax dollars of this particular conflict but if the Europeans want to step up and actually buy the weapons from American producers we're OK with that, but we're not going to fund it ourselves anymore," he said.

Vance recently travelled to England where he said, "if you care so much about this conflict you should be willing to play a more direct and a more substantial way in funding this war yourself".

This comes as a Ukrainian drone attack killed one person and wounded two more in Russia's Nizhny Novgorod on Monday.



US Vice President JD Vance ***PHOTO: PTI***

**TRUMP YET TO DECIDE ON CHINA TARIFFS**

Vance also said that Trump is yet to decide on imposing levies on China for purchasing oil from Russia, as Washington's ties with Beijing "affect many things that have nothing to do with the Russian situation".

"Well, the President said he's thinking about it, but he hasn't made any firm decisions," Vance said. "Obviously the China issue is a little bit more complicated because our relationship with China, it affects a lot of other things that have nothing to do with the Russian situation".

Trump, meanwhile, hoped China would buy more soybeans from the US.

"China is worried about its shortage of soybeans. Our great farmers produce the most robust soybeans," he wrote on Truth Social. "I hope China will quickly quadruple its soybean orders. This is also a way of substantially reducing China's Trade Deficit with the USA. Rapid service will be provided. Thank you President XI." *—Agencies*

## Syrian soldier kills medical worker in hospital

**DAMASCUS, 11 AUG**

Footage from security cameras at a hospital in the city of Sweida in southern Syria published on Sunday showed what appears to be the killing of a medical worker by the armed forces.

The video published by activist media collective Suwayda 24 was dated 16 July, during intense clashes between militias of the Druze minority community and armed tribal groups and government forces.

In the video, which was also widely shared on social media, a large group of people in scrubs can be seen kneeling on the floor in front of a group of armed men. The armed men grab a man and hit him on the head as if they are going to apprehend him. The man tries to resist by wrestling with one of the gunmen, before he is shot twice with an assault rifle and a pistol.

The video published by activist media collective Suwayda 24 was dated 16 July ***PHOTO: SCREENGRAB***

**SYRIA-US TALKS**

Meanwhile, Jordan said it will host a Jordanian-Syrian-American meeting on Tuesday to discuss ways to support the rebuilding of Syria, its Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates said, as Damascus seeks investment deals with international companies to revive its war-ravaged economy, Al Jazeera reported.

Syrian Foreign Minister Asaad al-Shaibani and United States envoy to Syria Thomas Barrack are expected to attend, the ministry said in a statement on Sunday, Al Jazeera added. *—PTI/ANI*

**AMERICAN RIVALRY WITH CHINA**

# *US deal with Pak may escalate Baloch clash*

**BALOCHISTAN, 11 AUG**

As the United States and Pakistan move forward with a new mining and minerals deal, experts warn the agreement will inflame tensions in Balochistan, a region already gripped by decades of violence, military occupation, and the denial of basic human rights.

According to The Diplomat, the US strategic interest in Balochistan is rooted not in development or diplomacy but in geopolitical rivalry with China, and at the cost of the Baloch people.

The mineral-rich region holds some of the world's largest untapped reserves of copper, gold, lithium, and other critical minerals essential for modern warfare and surveillance technologies.

The US strategic interest in Balochistan is rooted reportedly in geopolitical rivalry with China, at the cost of the Baloch people ***PHOTO: X***

The US military is the world's largest consumer of these minerals. And as competition with China over global supply chains intensifies, Washington's gaze has turned sharply to Balochistan.

But to extract these resources, the US must either confront or suppress the ongoing Baloch struggle for self-determination, a resistance movement that has repeatedly rejected all foreign investments imposed without local consent.

Past mega-projects, such as CPEC, Reko Diq, and Saindak, have brought no tangible benefit to the Baloch people. Instead, they have resulted in displacement, militarisation, and environmental degradation.

The new US-Pakistan mining deal, many fear, will follow the same path, deepening repression under the guise of development.

With the return of Donald Trump to the Presidency and his recent meeting with Pakistan Army Chief General Asim Munir, Washington seems poised to renew military and economic ties with Islamabad. Trump's focus on "massive oil reserves" in Pakistan serves as cover for more strategic aims: dominating the region's mineral wealth and countering China's influence, particularly in Balochistan. *—ANI*

## India on UK's 'Deport Now Appeal Later' list

**LONDON, 11 AUG**

India is among the countries being added to an expanded UK government list of countries where foreign criminals will be deported to their home countries once they are sentenced and before their appeals are heard.

In an announcement on Sunday, the UK Home Office confirmed that the scope of its "Deport Now Appeal Later" scheme will be nearly trebled from eight countries to 23.

Foreigners who have had their human rights claim refused will have a chance to take part in their UK appeal hearing remotely from overseas.

The list of countries covered under the remote hearing scheme, revived in 2023 included Finland, Nigeria, Estonia, Albania, Belize, Mauritius, Tanzania and Kosovo. Now, India will be added along with Angola, Australia, Botswana, Brunei, Bulgaria, Canada, Guyana, Indonesia, Kenya, Latvia, Lebanon, Malaysia, Uganda and Zambia.

According to official data referenced by the MoJ, foreign offenders make up around 12 per cent of the total prison population, with prison places costing GBP 54,000 a year on average.

The tougher new measures will apply to all foreign national offenders already in custody as well as those newly sentenced. *—PTI*

## Rupee falls 8P to close at 87.66 against USD

**MUMBAI, 11 AUG**

The rupee fell 8 paise to close at 87.66 against the US dollar on Monday, pressured by sustained dollar demand from importers, rising crude prices, and foreign fund outflows. Opening at 87.56, the rupee moved between 87.48 and 87.66. On Friday, it closed flat at 87.58. Analysts cited a strong dollar index (up 0.10 per cent to 98.28), higher Brent crude (USD 66.61/bbl), and FII outflows as key pressures. However, weak US dollar trends may offer some support. USD-INR is expected to trade in the 87.35–88 range. Markets await US and India inflation data and US-Russia talks on Ukraine. India's forex reserves fell USD 9.32 billion to USD 688.87 billion. Meanwhile, FIIs bought equities worth Rs 1,932.81 crore on Friday. *—PTI*

# Equity MF inflows soar to record high in July

## With a sharp jump of 80%, MF reached a high of Rs 42K cr

**NEW DELHI/MUMBAI, 11 AUG**

Equity mutual funds in India recorded a sharp 80 per cent month-on-month surge in net inflows in July 2025, reaching a record high of Rs 42,672 crore, up from Rs 23,568 crore in June, according to data from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI).

Of the total, Rs 30,416 crore came via new fund offerings (NFOs), highlighting continued investor appetite for fresh equity opportunities. Among categories, Small Cap Funds led the inflows with Rs 6,484 crore, despite higher associated risks. Mid Cap Funds followed with Rs 5,182 crore, and Large & Mid Cap Funds drew Rs 5,035 crore. Large Cap Funds brought in Rs 2,125 crore.

Flexi Cap Funds saw Rs 7,654 crore in inflows, as investors preferred schemes offering flexibility across market caps. Sectoral and Thematic Funds attracted Rs 9,426 crore, reflecting growing interest in focused themes like technology, infrastructure and manufacturing.

Of the total, Rs 30,416 crore came via new fund offerings, highlighting continued investor appetite for fresh equity opportunities *PHOTO: FREEPIK*

The only equity category to see net outflows was the Equity Linked Savings Scheme (ELSS), with Rs 368 crore withdrawn in July.

Manish Mehta, National Head – Sales, Marketing & Digital Business at Kotak Mahindra AMC, said, "A series of new fund offers and SIP inflows led to this high number. Domestic investors continue to keep their faith in mutual fund schemes and SIPs."

At the end of July, equity-oriented schemes had total assets under management (AUM) of Rs 33.28 lakh crore across 528 schemes. The mutual fund industry's overall AUM crossed Rs 75 lakh crore for the first time, ending the month at Rs 75.36 lakh crore, with an average AUM of Rs 77 lakh crore.

Meanwhile, a report from Motilal Oswal Financial Services revealed that Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) increased stakes in 44 of the Nifty-50 companies in June, while Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) reduced holdings in 40.

DII ownership hit an all-time high of 19.4 per cent, overtaking FIIs at 18.8 per cent. Promoter holdings fell to a record low of 49.3 per cent, while retail holdings remained stable at 12.4 per cent. *—ANI*

**AHEAD OF DON-PUTIN MEET**

# Sensex rebounds 746 points to close above 80,000

**MUMBAI, 11 AUG**

Benchmark indices rebounded sharply on Monday, with the BSE Sensex surging 746.29 points (0.93 per cent) to close at 80,604.08, buoyed by fresh foreign fund inflows and positive global cues. During the session, the index touched an intraday high of 80,636.05, rising 778.26 points (0.97 per cent).

The NSE Nifty also climbed 221.75 points (0.91 per cent) to end at 24,585.05.

Tata Motors, Eternal, Trent, SBI, UltraTech Cement, and Larsen & Toubro led the gains among Sensex constituents, while Bharat Electronics, Bharti Airtel, and Maruti lagged.

BSE midcap and smallcap indices rose 0.79 per cent and 0.35 per cent, respectively. Sectorally, Realty led with a 1.86 per cent rise, followed by Bankex (1.13 per cent), Healthcare (1.12 per cent), Auto (1.03 per cent), Financial Services (1 per cent), Utilities (0.92 per cent), Services (0.90 per cent), and Power (0.85 per cent). Consumer Durables was the only sectoral laggard.

Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit, attributed the rally to positive global sentiment, returning FII activity, and hopes for de-escalation in geopolitical tensions ahead of the US-Russia Summit.

Religare Broking's Ajit Mishra noted a broad-based recovery in heavyweights after recent declines.

Market breadth was positive, with 2,237 stocks advancing, 1,930 declining, and 170 unchanged on the BSE. *—PTI*

### Voltas shares tank 9% after Q1 earnings

Shares of Voltas Ltd plunged nearly 9 per cent on Monday after the Tata Group company reported a 58 per cent drop in consolidated net profit for the June quarter. The stock fell 7.78 per cent to Rs 1,202.20 on the BSE and 8.65 per cent to Rs 1,192 on the NSE. Voltas posted a Q1 FY26 net profit of Rs 140.61 crore, down from Rs 335 crore.

PHOTO: ANI

## Apple shipments rise 21.5%; Vivo leads mkt: Report

**NEW DELHI, 11 AUG**

Apple's smartphone shipments in India rose 21.5 per cent year-on-year to 5.9 million units in the first half of 2025, led by the iPhone 16, IDC reported. In Q2 alone, Apple shipped 2.7 million units, gaining a 7.5 per cent market share. India's smartphone market grew 0.9 per cent YoY in H1, shipping 70 million units, with Q2 up 7.3 per cent YoY at 37 million units. Vivo led Q2 with 19 per cent market share, followed by Samsung (14.5 per cent), Oppo (13.4 per cent), and Motorola (8 per cent). The premium segment (Rs 52,000–70,000) grew 96.4 per cent; iPhone 16/15 dominated. ASPs hit USD 275. Qualcomm's share rose to 33.9 per cent; MediaTek declined to 44.3 per cent. *—PTI*

## Alloy steel industry seeks curbs on imports from China

**NEW DELHI, 11 AUG**

Amid rising concerns over imports from China, the domestic alloy steel industry has filed a petition with the Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR) to consider anti-dumping duties on the cheap inbound shipments, which are posing a challenge to local players. The Alloy Steel Producers Association of India (ASPA) filed the petition on 31 July, Anil Dhawan, the Director General of the industry body told PTI in an interaction. The DGTR is the apex authority for administering all trade remedial measures.

"Necessary inputs have been provided in our petition as to how cheap imports from China continue to adversely affect our industry which has made huge investments to cater to the growing local demand from strategic sectors," Dhawan said. *—PTI*

## Shreeji sets IPO price at Rs 240-252 per share

**NEW DELHI, 11 AUG**

Shreeji Shipping Global Ltd, a provider of shipping and logistics solutions for dry bulk cargo, on Monday announced a price band of Rs 240 to Rs 252 per share for its Rs 411-crore initial public offering. The IPO would be available for public subscription from August 19 to 21, and the one-day bidding for anchor investors is scheduled for August 18, according to a public announcement made by Shreeji Shipping. Shreeji Shipping Global's IPO is entirely a fresh issue of 1.63 crore equity shares with no offer-for-sale component. At the upper-end of the price band, the company is expected to garner Rs 411 crore through the public issue. Half of the issue size has been reserved for qualified institutional buyers. *—PTI*

# No plans for restoration of Old Pension Scheme: FM

**NEW DELHI, 11 AUG**

There is no proposal under consideration of the Government of India for restoration of Old Pension Scheme in respect of central government employees covered under National Pension System, Parliament was informed on Monday.

The government had moved away from OPS due to its unsustainable fiscal liability on the government exchequer, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in a reply in the Lok Sabha.

NPS is a defined contribution-based scheme which was introduced for central government employees (except armed forces) joining service on or after 1 January, 2004.

With a view to improving upon the pensionary benefits for such employees, a committee was constituted under the chairpersonship of the then Finance Secretary to suggest measures to modify the NPS, she said.

Based on the deliberations of the committee with stakeholders, Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) has been introduced as an option under NPS with the objective of providing defined benefits after retirement to the central government employees covered under the NPS, she said.

- NPS is a defined contribution-based scheme, which was introduced for Central government employees joining service on or after 1 January, 2004.

The features of UPS, including the definition of family, have been designed in such a way as to ensure payment of assured payouts while also maintaining fiscal sustainability of the fund, she said.

She further said that the government employees who opt for UPS under NPS would also be eligible for option for availing benefits under the CCS (Pension) Rules, 2021 or the CCS (Extraordinary Pension) Rules, 2023, in the event of death of the government servant during service or his discharge on the ground of invalidation or disablement. *—PTI*

## Gold retreats from all-time high, ends Rs 900 lower

**NEW DELHI, 11 AUG**

Gold prices declined by Rs 900 to Rs 1,02,520 per 10g in Delhi on Monday, snapping a five-day rally as investors booked profits and geopolitical tensions eased.

The precious metal had touched a record Rs 1,03,420 per 10g on Friday. Gold of 99.5 per cent purity also slipped by Rs 900 to Rs 1,02,100 per 10g. Over the previous five sessions, prices had surged Rs 5,800.

Saumil Gandhi of HDFC Securities said upbeat market sentiment and news of a meeting between US President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin dampened safe-haven demand. Clarification from the White House on a reported 39 per cent tariff on gold bars also weighed on prices.

Silver prices dropped Rs 1,000 to Rs 1,14,000 per kg. *—PTI*

## SEBI mulls gateway for low-risk foreign investors

**NEW DELHI, 11 AUG**

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has unveiled plans for a new framework aimed at simplifying access for low-risk foreign investors in the Indian securities market. The initiative, dubbed the Single Window Automatic & Generalised Access for Trusted Foreign Investors (SWAGAT-FI), seeks to enhance compliance and boost India's appeal as an investment destination.

Under this proposed framework, low-risk foreign investors—including government-owned funds, central banks, sovereign wealth funds, and pension funds—would benefit from a unified registration process, thereby reducing redundant compliance requirements. As of 30 June 2025, there were 11,913 registered Foreign Portfolio Investors in India, holding assets worth approximately Rs 80.83 lakh crore. *—PTI*

# ONGC to invest Rs 4,600 cr in Andhra

**HYDERABAD, 11 AUG**

The Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) announced an investment exceeding Rs 4,600 crore to support the drilling of 10 development wells, the establishment of two unmanned platforms, the laying of an offshore pipeline, and the construction of an onshore gas processing facility in Konaseema District, Andhra Pradesh.

ONGC has sought fresh environmental clearance from the Ministry of Environment and Forests, as discussed in the minutes of an Experts Appraisal Committee (EAC) meeting on 24 July. The Letter of Award (LOA) for the Offshore Oil and Gas Contract areas KG/OSDSF/CHAN DRIKA/2021 (Chandrika), spanning 697sq km, and KG/OSDSF/GS49/2021 (GS49), covering 148sq km, was issued by the Director General of Hydrocarbons in September 2022 under the Discovered Small Field-III (DSF-III) policy.

The total land area required for the project is 26.3 hectares,

PHOTO: ANI

with plans to develop a greenbelt over 8.7 hectares, representing 33 pet cent of the total area. The EAC noted, "Capital cost of EMP (Environmental Management Plan) would be Rs 14 crores and the recurring cost would be Rs 3 crores per annum." Furthermore, the project is anticipated to generate 150 direc t jobs and 310 indirect jobs.

In its latest meeting, the EAC deferred the proposal, urging ONGC to conduct a comprehensive biodiversity assessment and prepare an environmental restoration action plan, with a dedicated budget for its implementation. *—PTI*

# Nvidia to pay 15% of China chip sales to US

**WASHINGTON DC, 11 AUG**

In a landmark move, the US government will take a 15 per cent cut of Nvidia and AMD's China sales from certain advanced AI chips, under a deal allowing exports that were previously banned over national security concerns.

This is not a tax or fine, but a negotiated condition for special export licences. The agreement makes the US a direct financial beneficiary of sensitive tech sales to a geopolitical rival.

Under the deal, Nvidia will pay 15 per cent of its revenue from H20 chip sales in China to the US government, while AMD will do the same for its MI308 chips. These powerful processors are vital for AI and supercomputing. Payments apply only to products requiring special export licences. Both firms must maintain detailed records and report sales to US authorities. Funds will support US chip research, tech security, and enforcement.

Previously, chip exports were blocked due to military use fears. But a total ban risked losing a crucial market and empowering Chinese rivals. Nvidia's CEO Jensen Huang reportedly lobbied hard, even meeting Donald Trump.

- Previously, chip exports were blocked due to military use fears. But a total ban risked losing a crucial market and empowering Chinese rivals.

The deal reflects easing US-China tensions, with both sides recently relaxing trade controls. While tech firms secure access to China, the move signals a future where governments may act as profit-sharing partners in strategic industries, at a political and financial cost to buyers like China. *—Agencies*

### 100% chip tariffs unlikely to hit Samsung

South Korea's leading semiconductor manufacturers are likely to escape the full impact of US President Donald Trump's proposed 100 per cent tariffs on imported chips, following clarifications from US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick. In an interview with Fox Business, Lutnick stated, "If you commit to build in America during his term... then he will allow you to import your chips - while you are building - without a tariff," provided companies file with the Commerce Department and are monitored throughout construction. Samsung operates a semiconductor foundry in Texas, and is in the process of constructing a USD 17 billion fabrication plant in Taylor, Texas, expected to open in 2026. *—ANI*

### US tariffs may hit affordable housing in India: Anarock

The proposed tariffs on Indian exports by the US are anticipated to adversely affect affordable home sales, particularly impacting small enterprises and their employees who are key buyers of properties priced up to Rs 45 lakh, according to real estate consultancy Anarock.

Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) constitute a significant portion of India's goods exports to the US. The implementation of higher tariffs would reduce the competitiveness of these products, leading to diminished business orders and potential layoffs, thereby affecting the incomes of workers in these sectors. Anarock noted that sales and launches of affordable homes had already declined in the aftermath of the Coivd-19 pandemic. *—PTI*

**SEEKS GOVT INTERVENTION**

# *Civil society protests as ICICI hikes min balance of savings a/cs*

The bank has raised the minimum balance requirement for savings accounts opened after 1 August to Rs 50,000 *PHOTO: ANI*

**KOLKATA, 11 AUG**

A civil society organisation advocating banking stakeholders' interests has written to the Finance Ministry, requesting its intervention into ICICI Bank's decision to raise the minimum average balance (MAB) requirement for new savings accounts, and said such a move is detrimental to the government's vision of inclusive banking and growth.

In a letter to the finance secretary, 'Bank Bachao Desh Bachao Manch' termed the private lender's decision as "unjust and regressive".

The bank has raised the minimum balance requirement for new savings accounts opened on or after 1 August by five times to Rs 50,000.

> **RBI has left it to the banks to decide on the minimum balance. Every bank has its own minimum balance requirement. Some banks have kept it at Rs 10,000, some have it at Rs 2,000 and some have even waived it. This is not in the (RBI's) regulatory domain**
>
> -Sanjay Malhotra, Reserve Bank of India Governor

The minimum monthly average balance (MAB) for savings bank accounts till July 31, 2025 for ICICI Bank customers was Rs 10,000.

Similarly, MAB for semi-urban locations and rural locations have been increased five times to Rs 25,000 and Rs 10,000, respectively, according to information available on the ICICI Bank website.

"This retrograde decision undermines the principle of inclusive banking," the forum's joint conveners, Biswaranjan Ray and Soumya Datta, claimed.

The civil society organisation called for the immediate withdrawal of the decision, and appealed to the government to protect depositors' interests and ensure broader financial inclusion.

Traditionally, public sector banks have lower balance requirements compared to private lenders with the requirement waived for Jan Dhan accounts. Several public sector banks have done away with the requirement, and customers who fail to maintain the minimum prescribed balance do not need to pay a penalty. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

## Diksha Dagar finishes in top 20 in PIF London C'ship

**LONDON, 11 AUG**

Diksha Dagar endured contrasting fortunes on the front and back nines of the final round to finish tied 19th at the PIF London Championship at Centurion Club. Diksha seemed to be going great with three birdies on the front nine, but she gave away all those gains on the back nine a matter of four holes between the 11th and the 14th. After rounds of 70-73-73 at the Par-73 Centurion Club, Diksha was 3-under 216 for three rounds and finished Tied-19th. Diksha is still 12th on the Order of Merit of the Ladies European Tour. Two other Indians, who cut, Aditi Ashok (72) and Pranavi Urs (75), were further down the leaderboard. Aditi (73-74-72) was even par for three rounds and Tied-34th while Pranavi (75-71-75) was 2-over and tied 44th.—*PTI*

## Crystal Palace loses appeal against demotion by UEFA

**LAUSANNE, 11 AUG**

Crystal Palace lost its appeal at sport's highest court on Monday against demotion to the third-tier Conference League because of breaching UEFA rules on club ownership with American investor John Textor. The Court of Arbitration for Sport said its judges dismissed the English cup winner's request to stay in the more lucrative second-tier Europa League in a case that also involved Premier League rival Nottingham Forest and French club Lyon. Forest and Lyon are confirmed to take entries directly into the Europa League in September, and Palace must start in the Conference League qualifying playoffs round next week. Palace was drawn last week to play Fredrikstad of Norway or Midtjylland of Denmark on 21 Aug. and 28 Aug.—*PTI*

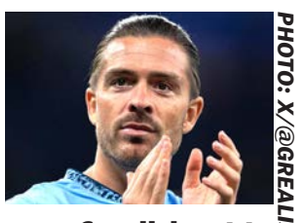


PHOTO: X/@GREALISH

## Grealish set to join Everton on season-long loan

**DUBAI, 11 AUG**

Everton has agreed a season-long loan deal for Manchester City's England midfielder Jack Grealish, English media reported on Monday. The 29-year-old joined City from Aston Villa for 100 million pounds ($134.57 million) in 2021 but has fallen out of favour there and is in urgent need of game time ahead of next year's World Cup. Grealish made only seven league starts last season and was not included in City's recent Club World Cup squad. He was also omitted from England's 2024 European Championship (EURO) squad. —*PTI*

## Justin Rose rallies late and beats Spaun in Memphis

**MEMPHIS, 11 AUG**

Justin Rose made up a three-shot deficit over the last five holes against hard-luck Tommy Fleetwood, and then made two birdies in a playoff against US Open champion J.J. Spaun to win the FedEx St. Jude Championship. Rose delivered another sterling performance, closing with a 3-under 67 for his 24th victory worldwide that puts him back into the top 10 in the world at age 45 and secures his spot in another Ryder Cup. He birdied four straight holes and narrowly missed a 13-foot birdie putt on the 18th hole at the TPC Southwind for a win in regulation. Rose wound up making six birdies over the last eight holes he played.—*PTI*

# India hopes to break ODI Women's WC jinx

### India has never won a world title despite coming close

**MUMBAI, 11 AUG**

ICC Chairman Jay Shah with cricketers Harmanpreet, Smriti, Jemimah, and former players Mithali and Yuvraj Singh during an event organised ahead of the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup 2025, in Mumbai, on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

India captain Harmanpreet Kaur on Monday said her team is determined to end its ICC trophy drought during next month's ODI Women's World Cup, and the preceding series against title favourites Australia will give the side a clear picture of where it stands.

India has never won a world title despite coming close on a few occasions, including the 2017 ODI World Cup in England, where they finished runners-up to capture the country's imagination.

"We want to break that barrier that all Indians have been waiting for. World Cups are always special, always want to do something special for my country. Whenever I see Yuvi bhaiya (Yuvraj Singh), it gives me a lot of motivation," Harmanpreet said here at the trophy tour unveiling ceremony for the ODI World Cup.

Former India all-rounder Yuvraj Singh, former captain Mithali Raj, and Harmanpreet's teammates Smriti Mandhana and Jemimah Rodrigues were also part of the function.

India go into the Australia series at home, starting September 14, high on confidence after beating England in an away ODI and T20I series.

"Playing against Australia is always challenging, and we get to know what our standing is. The series (three ODIs vs Australia) will give us a lot of confidence. We have been putting a lot of effort into our training camps, and the results are showing," said Harmanpreet.

Her match-winning 171 in the semifinal against Australia back in 2017 remains fresh in Harmanpreet's mind.

"That knock was something special to me and the entire women's cricket team. A lot of things changed for me after that knock. When we came back to India, even though we had lost, a lot of people were waiting and cheering for us. I still get goosebumps," she added.

Yuvraj said players will have to individually believe that they can win matches for the country.

"(I would say) play the situation and not the expectation and be in the moment," he said.

"It's a great opportunity to create history. But that doesn't mean that from the starting point you are thinking of winning it. You have to experience the whole enigma of it. You have to feel that you have put in the process, and results will come."

The multiple World Cup-winner advised the players to keep faith in their experience.

"But if you want to win the World Cup, you will be under pressure, things won't go well, and that's when experience and self-belief have to take over. You have to believe that you want to win the game for your country (on) that day," added Yuvraj, India's player of the tournament in the 2011 World Cup.

Both Rodrigues and Mandhana noted that there has been a significant change in the team's attitude when it comes to preparations.

"A lot has changed with my preparation and mindset. I want to have a lot of confidence coming from my preparation, and that gives me clarity," said Rodrigues. —*PTI*

## JUNIOR MEN'S NATIONAL C'SHIPS

PHOTO: PTI

# 30 teams to compete in Junior Hockey Nationals

**NEW DELHI, 11 AUG**

Thirty teams will compete in the 15th Hockey India Junior Men's National Championships, which will be held in the new division-based format in Jalandhar from Tuesday.

The new format has already been introduced and implemented in the senior and sub junior men's and women's, and the junior women's national championships earlier this year.

The 30 participating teams are split into Division 'A', Division 'B', and Division 'C', with promotion and relegation adding an extra edge to the competition. The teams in Division 'A' will be fighting for the title, while the top two teams from Divisions 'B' and 'C' will earn promotion to the next tier.

The bottom two sides in Divisions 'A' and 'B' will face relegation to the next division for 2026.

Division 'A' features the country's 12 best junior men's sides, including defending champions Punjab, runners-up Uttar Pradesh, and third-placed Haryana.

Pool matches begin on August 16, leading to the quarterfinals, semifinals, and the final from August 20 to 23.

Division 'B' will feature league matches only, with the top two-ranked teams being promoted to Division 'A' and the last two relegated to Division 'C'. Matches will run from August 12 to 16.

Division 'C' will also be played in a league format with teams divided into two pools of four teams each, with the top two-ranked teams being promoted to Division 'B'.

Across all three divisions, teams will earn 3 points for a win and 1 point for a draw.

Hockey India President Dilip Tirkey said, "Junior tournaments are extremely crucial for the future of Indian hockey."

"The young players will learn a lot playing in this format as we will see a different level of competitiveness among teams across all divisions as they battle for promotion and the championship title," he added. —*PTI*

## Second ODI: West Indies level series

**TAROUBA , 30 OCT**

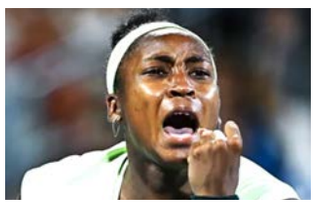
Roston Chase and Justin Greaves led West Indies to a five-wicket victory over Pakistan with 10 balls to spare in the rain-reduced second one-day cricket international, leveling the three-match series at 1-1 on Monday.

Chase's 49 not out off 47 balls included two sixes and the winning boundary as West Indies scored 184-5 in 33.2 overs on Sunday. The hosts were chasing a revised target of 181 runs in 35 overs under the DLS method after multiple rain interruptions saw Pakistan's innings end at 171-7 in 37 overs. Right-arm fast bowler Jayden Seales took 3-23 in seven overs.

West Indies stumbled from 101-3 after 18 overs at Brian Lara Stadium in Tarouba, Trinidad and Tobago, to 111-5 off 24 overs, including the wicket of Sherfane Rutherford, who hit a 33-ball 45 with three sixes and four fours. —*PTI*

## Walkover for Swiatek; Gauff and Pegula win in Cincinnati

**CINCINNATI, 11 AUG**



Wimbledon winner Iga Swiatek of Poland advanced to the fourth round of the ATP and WTA Cincinnati Open on Sunday as upcoming opponent Marta Kostyuk was forced to withdraw.

The 27th-ranked Ukrainian cited a right wrist injury for the pullout, which came a day after six-time Grand Slam winner Swiatek, seeded third, advanced to the third round with the loss of just five games. Jelena Ostapenko, the 2017 Roland Garros champion, also benefited from a walkover as Camila Osorio withdrew with an abdominal injury.

In other women's action, second-seeded French Open champion Coco Gauff battled through a tough first set to beat China's Wang Xinyu 6-3, 6-2., Gauff, who lifted the trophy in Cincinnati in 2023 and went on to claim her first Grand Slam title at the US Open that year, grinded through a first set marred by five service breaks., But the seed steadied in the second set to run out the winner in 71 minutes on a first match point., "It was a rough start," Gauff said. "But it was about just trusting myself and the work we've done in practice."I was able to let it all go in the second set. Third seed Jessica Pegula, runner-up last year to Aryna Sabalenka, defeated Kimberly Birrell 6-4, 6-3. —*PTI*

Iga Swiatek **PHOTO: X/@Iga**

## CHENNAI GRAND MASTER

18-year-old V Pranav (R) earned a praiseworthy draw against Arjun Erigaisi in the fifth round of the Chennai Grand Masters **PHOTO: PTI**

# Pranav forces draw against Erigaisi

**CHENNAI, 11 AUG**

Top seed Arjun Erigaisi dropped points for the second round running in the Chennai Grand Masters as a battling Pranav V claimed a praiseworthy draw in their fifth-round match-up here on Monday.

The 18-year-old Pranav, the lowest-rated player in the Masters field, beat the odds to hold Indian No. 1 Erigaisi, to follow upon his draw against second seed Anish Giri on Sunday.The draw in the Erigaisi-Pranav encounter allowed Vincent Keymer to retain his one-point lead atop the standings.

The German GM failed to budge a resilient Vidit Gujrathi with black pieces in the fifth round, as he settled for a draw for the second consecutive game to move to four points.Erigaisi and Keymer will face off on Tuesday in a potentially title-determining sixth-round clash, where the latter will wield the white pieces.

Meanwhile, the Netherlands' Giri continued his disappointing run as he registered his fifth draw on the trot in the tournament, against Indian GM Karthikeyan Murali, who manufactured a stalemate against his higher-rated opponent.Nihal Sarin followed up his upset win in the fourth round over Erigaisi with a straightforward draw against American GM Awonder Liang.

The only decisive game of the round saw Dutch GM Jorden van Foreest pip the USA's Ray Robson in a nervy encounter, which lasted nearly four-and-a-half hours. In the only all-Indian clash in the main draw for the day, Pranav sprang a surprise on the higher-rated Erigaisi early on.

The reigning world junior champion deviated from expected lines by playing the classical-central variation of the Ruy Lopez opening with his black pieces."I was preparing a lot for d4. I did not have a lot of time to prepare for e4. This line, which I played today, I had originally planned for Anish Giri a few days back. I thought it would be a good plan against Arjun, too," said Pranav. —*PTI*

## RITIKA BAGS HEAVYWEIGHT GOLD

**BANGKOK, 11 AUG**

Ritika bagged gold in the women's 80+kg category as India finished a creditable overall fourth in the Under-22 category of the Asian Boxing Champion ships here on Monday.

The Indian U-22 contingent concluded their campaign with a total of 13 medals, while the U19 group returned home with a total of 14 medals, including three gold, seven silver, and four bronze.The effort helped the U-19 side to end up second overall in the tournament.

However, the day's sole gold came through Ritika in the women's 80+kg final, where she kept her composure under pressure to beat Kazakhstan's Assel Toktassyn.Facing a strong boxer, Ritika mixed caution with aggression to land some telling blows, bagging India's fourth gold in the event.In the morning session, Yatri Patel settled for a silver after losing to Khumorabonu Mamajonova of Uzbekistan in women's 57kg, Later, Ishan Kataria lost to Khalimjon Mamasoliev of Uzbekistan in the 90+kg gold medal clash, as both the Indian boxers secured silver. —*PTI*

# With Lionel Messi out, Orlando drops Miami to 6th in a rout

**DUBAI, 11 AUG**

Luis Muriel scored a goal in each half and Martín Ojeda had a goal and an assist to lead Orlando City to a 4-1 victory over Inter Miami in a Major League Soccer (MLS) match on Sunday night. Muriel scored in the second minute to give Orlando City. But the lead that lasted just three minutes as Yannick Bright scored his first career goal in 40 appearances to pull Miami even.

Ojeda collected his 13th assist on Muriel's goal, and then scored his 14th in the second half to give Orlando City a 3-1 lead, taking his tally of goal contributions to 27 — the most in the league this season. Marco then scored unassisted in the 88th minute, his 10th goal in his first season in the league, to complete a comfortable victory.

Miami superstar Lionel Messi, who is tied with Nashville SC's Sam Surridge for the league lead with 18 goals, missed the match due to a right leg injury. The 38-year-old suffered on 2 August in a Leagues Cup match against Necaxa. Messi's 18 goals have come while playing in 18 of his club's 23 matches.

Orlando City jumps into fourth place in the Eastern Conference. —*PTI*

# Eric Maxim-Moting scores twice in second half

**NEW DELHI, 30 OCT**

Eric Maxim Choupo-Moting scored early in the second half and again on a penalty kick late in stoppage time to rally the New York Red Bulls to a 2-1 victory over Real Salt Lake on Sunday night.

Real Salt Lake grabbed the lead three minutes into the match and took it into half-time after 18-year-old rookie midfielder Zavier Gozo used assists from William Agada and Diego Luna to score his third goal of the season.

Agada's assist was his second while Luna's was his fifth., The Red Bulls pulled even in the 52nd minute when Choupo-Moting used assists from Emil Forsberg and defender Raheem Edwards to score. It was a career-high eighth assist for Forsberg and the second for Edwards. Choupo-Moting scored his 15th goal this season, nine minutes into stoppage time. The PK was awarded after he was fouled by Justen Glad. —*PTI*

Eric **PHOTO: X/@Eric**

## 'KHULJA SIM SIM'

# *Ch'garh man gets calls from Virat & de Villiers on new SIM*

**DUBAI, 11 AUG**

For Manish Bisi, a young man from Madagaon village in Chhattisgarh's Gariaband district, the simple act of buying a SIM card from a local mobile phone shop let loose a whirlwind of disbelief, celebrity, and a bizarre series of events that felt more like a movie script than reality.

The SIM card once belonged to rising cricket star Rajat Patidar, and soon an awe-struck Bisi was fielding calls from legends like Virat Kohli and AB de Villiers.

What Manish and his friend, Khemraj, thought was a system glitch when they saw the profile picture

PHOTO: @MUFADDAL_VOHRA/X, @IPL

of Royal Challengers Bengaluru, RCB, captain Patidar after they installed WhatsApp soon turned as real as voices on the other end of the phone line., captain Patidar after they installed WhatsApp soon turned as real as the voices on the other end of the phone line. The tryst with instant fame for Manish, son of farmer Gajendra Bisi, began on 28 June when he purchased a new Jio SIM from a mobile shop in Deobhog, around 8 kilometres from his village. Manish and Khemraj were soon sucked into a world of disbelief as callers identified themselves as Kohli, de Villiers, and Yash Dayal, though the two tried to remain grounded in reality, thinking these were all part of some elaborate prank by friends. The duo even played along, Khemraj claimed., The story turned on its head when, on 15 July, Patidar himself called up with a fervent "brother, please return my SIM". —*PTI*